

Unit 38: Alternative Pursuits for Outdoor Adventure

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| Unit code: | M/600/0007 |
| 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, prepare and participate in alternative pursuits for outdoor adventure.

● Unit introduction

Alternative pursuits are becoming increasingly important in the overall make up of the outdoor industry. Individuals, schools, outdoor centres and other providers now supplement the core outdoor activities of mountain walking, rock climbing, caving, kayaking, canoeing and sailing with activities that are more accessible, less skill and equipment-orientated and generally simpler and cheaper to deliver. However, within this group of activities there are a few which actually require more facilities and are more expensive to run, such as white water rafting and ropes courses.

Participants need a good understanding of the range of alternative pursuits and their aims and objectives. This unit covers the traditional land, water and air-based activities as well as newer adrenaline, corporate and group-building activities. Learners will develop an understanding of the different characteristics of alternative pursuits and be able to explain why they are different.

With all outdoor and adventurous activities, clearly defined aims and objectives are important in directing learning and in ensuring that the activities are delivered in a controlled safe manner.

Adaptation of outdoor pursuits to the different environments has been a key influence in how activities are developed and practised. This unit covers the importance of the location where the activities are pursued, the type of environment (water, land or air) in which the activities are practised, and the type of equipment and facilities required for the activity. Learners will explore the importance of placing alternative pursuits in the context of the outdoor environment and be able to compare and contrast them with the traditional core outdoor activities.

The unit gives learners the opportunity to experience as many alternative pursuits as possible, and in so doing learn about the practical skills required to undertake them effectively and safely. Learners will have the opportunity to demonstrate their practical skills and abilities in two different alternative pursuits, reflecting on how their performance in the activities could be improved and developed.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know about a range of different alternative pursuits
- 2 Know the effect equipment and the environment have on alternative pursuits
- 3 Be able to participate in alternative pursuits
- 4 Be able to review own performance in alternative pursuits.

Unit content

1 Know about a range of different alternative pursuits

Alternative pursuits: eg adventure races, bouldering, challenge events (adventure challenges, corporate challenges, fundraising challenges), coast steering, fell running, gorge walking, group initiative problems (GIPs), mountain biking, raft building, ropes courses (high and low), skiing, snowboarding, water-based activities (body boarding, kayak surfing, surfing, white water rafting); participant groups eg adult thrill seeking groups, corporate groups, families, individuals, school groups, summer activity holiday groups; aims eg adrenaline and thrill seeking, bonding, GIPs, fun, financial, ice breakers, leadership development, physical development, self-esteem, social development, team building; objectives eg access (location, proximity of site, land use, prevailing conditions), adapted from other activities (bouldering, paragliding, snowboarding, bodyboarding), alternative from core outdoor activities (coast steering, mountain biking, surfing), simple to deliver (gorge walking, fell running, GIPs)

2 Know the effect equipment and the environment have on alternative pursuits

Natural environment: eg beaches, boulders, footpaths, bridle ways, green lanes, coastlines, coastal cliffs, fells, gorges, mountains, moors, heaths, lakes, reservoirs, tarns, lochs, canals, rivers, snow, bays, surf, open ocean

Manmade environment: eg climbing walls, group initiative areas, mountain bike courses, ropes courses, manmade ski slopes (indoor and outdoor), white water courses

Equipment: personal equipment eg cycle, kayak, body board, surf board; GIP equipment eg blind square, discourse, juggernaut, spiders-web; individual safety equipment eg buoyancy aid, glasses/goggles, helmet, spare clothing, torch, whistle; group safety equipment eg emergency shelter, first aid kit, flares, mobile phone, stove, throw line

Influences: eg access, planning restrictions, cost, demand, trends, health and safety, media

3 Be able to participate in alternative pursuits

Health and safety: risk assessments; safety techniques eg spotting, buddy system, self rescue, rescue of others; safety equipment eg equipment required, care of equipment; warning signs and signals eg crossed skis above casualty, wind sock, surf area markers; incident management; further considerations eg light, time, weather

Practical skills: appropriate to activity eg group skills (facilitating skills, team work, leadership, spotting, communication, planning), individual skills (travelling, stopping, turning, balance, speed, strength, planning), equipment knowledge and skills (rope use, rigging, assembly and use of equipment, construction and destruction of activities), problem solving skills (hazard identification, planning, thought processes, working out processes, reading of environments, reviewing)

Advanced skills: eg leading, facilitating, associated with competition; appropriate to activity eg surf kayaking (wave choice, making way heading out, cut backs, bottom and top of wave turns, edging the boat, Eskimo rolling, support strokes), gorge walking (reading the water levels, recognising hazards, choosing an efficient route, climbing vertical walls, descending vertical drops, rope work, spotting), skiing/snowboarding (stopping, turning, linking turns, correct independent use of uplift, safe efficient descent of red runs, reading of slope signs)

4 Be able to review own performance in alternative pursuits

Review performance: eg skills workshops, advanced courses, governing body elite athlete programmes, transference of skills from alternative pursuits to core outdoor activities, personal reflection, goal setting, skills development programme; strengths and 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 four different alternative pursuits | M1 compare and contrast four different alternative pursuits, making reference to their aims and objectives | |
| P2 describe four different effects that the environment and equipment have on participation in alternative pursuits | | |
| P3 describe three influences on participation in alternative pursuits | | |
| P4 describe health and safety considerations relating to participation in four different alternative pursuits | M2 explain health and safety considerations relating to participation in four different alternative pursuits | |
| P5 demonstrate practical skills in two different alternative pursuits, with tutor support [RL1, RL2, RL4, RL5, TW1, TW3, TW5, SM1, SM2] | M3 independently demonstrate practical skills in two different alternative pursuits | D1 demonstrate advanced practical skills in two different alternative pursuits |
| P6 review own performance in the demonstration of practical skills in two different alternative pursuits, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. [SM1, SM2, SM5, SM6, EP2, EP3, EP4, RL1, RL2, RL3, RL4, RL5] | M4 explain suggestions relating to skills development based on identified areas for improvement. | D2 justify suggestions made relating to skills development. |

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 | RL – reflective learners | SM – self-managers |
|-----|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| | CT – creative thinkers | TW – team workers | EP – effective participators |

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Alternative pursuits are a key part of the outdoor education industry. They allow those delivering outdoor activities to access a wider range of user groups than would be possible if only the traditional outdoor activities were delivered. These activities expose user groups to the nature, demands and skills associated with outdoor activities.

Tutors can introduce learners to a wide variety of alternative pursuits and will need the personal skills and experience to instruct, or access to instructors with the relevant skills and knowledge of such activities. Learners will need to demonstrate their practical skills in two different alternative pursuits.

Centres should choose alternative pursuits that they can deliver easily and which reflect the area in which the centre is located. For example, a centre located in or near to mountainous areas may use gorges and gorge walking, mountain biking or fell running. A centre located on, or near to, the coast could consider alternative pursuits such as surfing, body boarding or coast steering.

Where possible, centres should choose an activity based on group development and team building to reflect the growing usage of these activities, examples include; use of ropes courses, group initiative problems, raft building or white water rafting.

Alternative pursuits relies on the environment, facilities or equipment and this is a key consideration when including alternative pursuits in an outdoor education programme.

It is important that learners understand how the range of deliverable activities is influenced by the surrounding environment, and how the needs of the participant group can be matched to the aims and objectives of the activity to produce the best outcome for the group. This theory-based content should be integrated with practical experience. This will give learners the opportunity, in a practical setting, to show how the range of alternative pursuits, their aims and objectives, are influenced by environmental factors and the capabilities of the group. Practical delivery will also give learners the opportunity to consider the safe delivery of alternative pursuits and match, through experience, the activity to the participant group.

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 |
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| Tutor introduction and overview of the unit |
| Assignment 1: Alternative Pursuits (P1, M1). Tutor introduces the assignment brief |
| Learners in groups to carry out investigation of different types of alternative pursuits, location and environment. Learners report back to class and findings consolidated |
| Tutor-led practical alternative pursuits experience: one day event – each event should be different, drawing on local resources and covering a range of skills and knowledge |
| Tutor to lead on aims and objectives of different alternative pursuits |
| Individual learning time and assignment completion |
| Assignment 2: Equipment and the Environment (P2, P3, P4, M2). Tutor introduces the assignment brief |
| Tutor-led practical alternative pursuits experience: one day event – each event should be different, drawing on local resources and covering a range of skills and knowledge |
| Tutor-led practical alternative pursuits experience: one day event – each event should be different, drawing on local resources and covering a range of skills and knowledge |
| Individual learning time and assignment completion |
| Assignment 3: Participate in Alternative Pursuits (P5, M3, D1) and Assignment 4: Review Own Performance of Participation in Alternative Pursuits (P6, M4, D2). Tutor introduces the assignment briefs |
| Tutor to lead group discussion: the influence of environment on alternative pursuits |
| Formal lecture: health and safety in alternative pursuits and safety DVD |
| Tutor-led practical alternative pursuits experience: one day event – each event should be different, drawing on local resources and covering a range of skills and knowledge |
| Tutor-led practical alternative pursuits experience: one day event – each event should be different, drawing on local resources and covering a range of skills and knowledge |
| Tutor to introduce the influence of equipment on alternative pursuits |
| Learners to demonstrate practical alternative pursuits skills and maintain a log/diary. Tutor observation and assessment |
| Learners to demonstrate practical alternative pursuits skills and maintain a log/diary. Tutor observation and assessment |
| Learners to demonstrate practical alternative pursuits skills and maintain a log/diary. Tutor observation and assessment |
| Learners to review own performance in two different alternative pursuits |
| Individual learning time and assignment completion |
| Review of unit and assessment |

Assessment

For P1, learners need to describe four different alternative pursuits. Learners must identify their participant groups, aims and objectives. For P2, learners need to describe how equipment and the environment influence participation in alternative pursuits. A grid matching alternative pursuit characteristics and effects from equipment and the environment in which the activity is located, supported by a written description, would be one way of meeting criteria P1 and P2.

For P3, learners need to describe three influences on participation in alternative pursuits. This requires learners to have knowledge of the activities and their background. For instance, learners will need to be aware of how costs, the demands for a particular activity and how the media and trends impact on the demands and costs of the particular alternative pursuit they are examining.

For P4, learners need to describe the health and safety considerations for four different alternative pursuits. The most effective way for this to be accurately achieved is through practical activity. Assessment for P4 can be achieved through a risk assessment of each activity. In their assessment, learners will need to cover the *Unit content* for Health and Safety.

For P5, learners should demonstrate practical skills in two different alternative pursuits, with tutor support. This could be assessed through tutor observation using a grid prioritising the key practical skills for each alternative pursuit. By participating practically, learners will have a greater depth and breadth of knowledge relating to all the assessment criteria and they should refer to their practical experiences when attempting criteria P1, P2 and P3. There is scope in this for learners to show practical skills in facilitating/leading the activity as well as demonstrating actual activity skills.

For P6, learners should review their performance and progress in the two alternative pursuits, reflecting on their learning and identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Grading criterion M1 requires learners to compare and contrast four different alternative pursuits using their differing aims and objectives to differentiate between them. Learners should also refer to differing aims and objectives as defined by the environment or prevailing external factors such as the weather, aims and objectives of participants who are taking part in adrenaline activities, compared with team building or taster activities. Learners should be able to compare how alternative pursuits differ in relation to specialist equipment required, such as hang gliding, mountain biking or ropes course, through to those requiring little or no specialist equipment, such as fell running, gorge walking or coast steering.

For M2, learners need to explain the health and safety considerations relating to participation in four alternative pursuits. Learners will need to show that they understand how different alternative pursuits have different health and safety considerations and how these can also be influenced by the participants themselves and the environments alternative pursuits are conducted in.

For M3, learners need to independently demonstrate practical skills in two different alternative pursuits. Learners should recognise that within the range of alternative pursuits there is much transference of learning, for example from bouldering to climbing.

For M4, which links to P6, learners need to explain their suggestions relating to skills development. Learners need to provide reasons or evidence for their suggestions.

For D1, learners need to demonstrate advanced practical skills in two alternative pursuits, and be able to apply the skills with precision and confidence. In achieving criterion D1, learners may also demonstrate their ability in the alternative pursuit by leading the activity or by assisting others to perform well in the activity. Tutors should refer to the *Unit content* for Advanced Skills and complete an appropriate observation record to confirm achievement.

For D2, learners need to reflect on their skills development and knowledge, selecting and highlighting where they have executed these skills and then identifying gaps in their skills base. Learners need to show that they can select possible methods/routes to enhance these skills and techniques and be able to justify why they have made these choices. This could be achieved through a skills audit, target setting and appraisal with the unit tutor.

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 | Alternative Pursuits | You have gained a work placement in an outdoor pursuits centre and through practical participation aim to improve your skills in alternative pursuits. | Written report |
| P2, P3, P4, M2 | Equipment and the Environment | | Written report |
| P5, M3, D1 | Participate in Alternative Pursuits | | Practical observation and assessment Observation record Diary/log |
| P6, M4, D2 | Review Own Performance of Participation in Alternative Pursuits | | Presentation Witness statement |

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 and the BTEC Sport and Exercise Sciences suite:

| Level 2 Sport | Level 3 Sport | Level 3 Sport and Exercise Sciences |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| Expedition Experience | Outdoor and Adventurous Activities | Outdoor and Adventurous Activities |
| Leading Outdoor and Adventurous Activities | Skills for Land-based Outdoor and Adventurous Activities | |
| Outdoor and Adventurous Activities | Skills for Water-based Outdoor and Adventurous Activities | |
| | Leading Land-based Outdoor and Adventurous Activities | |
| | Equipment and Facilities for Outdoor and Adventurous Activities | |
| | Impact and Sustainability in Outdoor Adventure | |
| | Environmental Education for Outdoor Adventure | |
| | Assessing Risk in Sport | |

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

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

Essential resources

For effective delivery of this unit, centres will require access to a variety of man-made outdoor activity facilities such as ropes courses and climbing walls and the equipment needed for these activities. Basic equipment in an open safe environment should be provided for problem-solving tasks. Most specialist equipment can be hired at outdoor venues making this unit a good choice for those centres which do not specialise in the outdoors.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Engagement with industry professionals with experience in leading alternative pursuits would prove beneficial. This could be via visits, talks or guest speakers. Visits to venues where alternative pursuits take place are essential.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Bane M – *Over the Edge* (Indigo, 1998) ISBN 9780575400856

Barton B – *Safety, Risk and Adventure in Outdoor Activities* (Paul Chapman Publishing, 2006) ISBN 9781412920780

Beard C and Wilson J – *Experiential Learning* (Kogan Page, 2006) ISBN 978074944489

Farr M – *The Darkness Beckons* (Diadem, 1991) ISBN 9780939748327

Foxon F – *BASI Manual: Alpine Manual* (British Association of Ski Instructors, 1998) ISBN 9780904212068

Glover D – *Team Building through Physical Challenges* (Human Kinetics Publishers, 2009) ISBN 9780873223591

Long J – *Gym Climb* (Chockstone Press, 1994) ISBN 9780934641753

Mattos B – *Kayak Surfing* (Pesda Press, 2004) ISBN 9780954706104

McNeill C – *Start Orienteering Games for Learning Orienteering Skills* (Geocenter International, 1991) ISBN 9781851370801

O'Bannon A – *Allen and Mike's Really Cool Telemark Tips* (Falcon, 2005) ISBN 9781560448518

Ogilvie K and Noble L – *Leading and Managing Groups in the Outdoors* (Institute of Outdoor Learning, 2005) ISBN 9781898555094

Ruse D and Collins L – *Canoe and Kayak Games* (Rivers, 2005) ISBN 9780955061400

Tomlinson J – *Extreme Sports* (Carlton, 2004) ISBN 9781844427086

Journals

Canoe Focus

Climber

Mountain Biking UK magazine

Snowboarder

Summit

The Great Outdoors

Websites

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|------------------------------------|--|
| Blue Dome | www.bluedome.co.uk |
| The British Mountaineering Council | www.thebmc.co.uk |
| British Surf Association | www.britsurf.co.uk |
| High Ropes courses | www.goape.co.uk |
| Mountain biking | www.britishcycling.org.uk |
| The Royal Yachting Association | www.rya.org.uk |
| Snowsport England | www.snowsportengland.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 ... |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Reflective learners | demonstrating practical skills in two different alternative pursuits, with tutor support reviewing own performance in the demonstration of practical skills in two different alternative pursuits, identifying strengths and areas for improvement |
| Team workers | demonstrating practical skills in two different alternative pursuits, with tutor support |
| Self-managers | demonstrating practical skills in two different alternative pursuits, with tutor support reviewing own performance in the demonstration of practical skills in two different alternative pursuits, identifying strengths and areas for improvement |
| Effective participators | reviewing own performance in the demonstration of practical skills in two different alternative pursuits, 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 | exploring and researching the variety of different alternative pursuits |
| Creative thinkers | participating in team building tasks and group initiative problems |
| Reflective learners | participating in new alternative pursuits and assessing own progress |
| Team workers | assisting each other when participating in alternative pursuits while combating difficult activities, weather, leadership, group issues |
| Self-managers | participating in new alternative pursuits and assessing own progress |
| Effective participators | developing practical skills in alternative pursuits. |

● 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 | exploring different types of alternative pursuits, their aims and objectives and the influences impacting on alternative pursuits |
| ICT – Find and select information | |
| Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task | exploring different types of alternative pursuits, their aims and objectives and the influences impacting on alternative pursuits |
| 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 | exploring different types of alternative pursuits, their aims and objectives and the influences impacting on alternative pursuits completing risk assessments |
| Bring together information to suit content and purpose | completing risk assessments |
| Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience | completing risk assessments reviewing own performance |
| Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists | reviewing own performance |
| English | |
| Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts | completing risk assessments reviewing own performance |
| Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions | exploring different types of alternative pursuits, their aims and objectives and the influences impacting on alternative pursuits completing risk assessments reviewing own performance |
| Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively | exploring different types of alternative pursuits, their aims and objectives and the influences impacting on alternative pursuits completing risk assessments reviewing own performance. |