



# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## COURSE FRAMEWORK

### INTRODUCTION

This Course Framework provides the essential basis for the development of senior secondary courses in Outdoor Education and for the assessment and reporting of student outcomes in these courses. It has been primarily designed to guide teachers in the areas of outdoor recreation and environmental education but it will also be of value to teachers in other curriculum areas who want to gain from use of the outdoor setting.

### SUBJECT RATIONALE

Outdoor education includes any learning experience in which the outdoor environment plays a direct and indispensable role in the learning process. It provides the opportunity for students to participate in activities that enhance the growth of personal and social skills, promote the development of environmental awareness and enable the acquisition of skills related to outdoor recreation.

Because of the strong experiential nature of outdoor activities, challenging demands are placed upon the personal and social skills of each individual. In response, students generally strengthen their self-concept and develop a greater sense of caring and responsibility towards others. Lasting friendships are often formed.

A fundamental aspect of outdoor education is the development of a positive relationship between people and the natural environment. A primary aim is to foster an awareness of the sensitive qualities of the natural environment and build responsibility for its care and conservation. The same ethic can guide actions in our everyday lives.

Outdoor education enriches the quality of students' lives. Students develop attitudes and acquire knowledge and skills that assist in making outdoor activities safe and enjoyable. These experiences give them a sound basis for a lifelong association with a range of healthy leisure pursuits.

Outdoor education provides a unique medium through which physical, mental, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development is facilitated. Quality outdoor education requires well developed physical, personal and interpersonal skills. Outdoor education provides a means of identifying and developing qualities and skills, such as leadership, teamwork, decision making, self reliance,

communication, responsibility and confidence, not emphasised in other educational areas. These skills and qualities are applicable in every day life in addition to a vast array of employment situations.

Outdoor education courses may increase access to nationally recognised vocational education courses.

By its nature, outdoor education offers equality of participation and outcome for all.

## **GOALS**

Goals are statements of intended student outcomes. All courses based on this Course Framework should enable students to:

- Demonstrate personal qualities and skills relevant to a range of challenging outdoor recreation situations;
- Examine the defining aspects of the outdoor recreation experience;
- Investigate and show skills specific to selected outdoor recreation activities;
- Appreciate the potential of participating in lifelong recreational outdoor pursuits;
- Analyse the processes involved in participating in group activities and demonstrate effective teamwork;
- Investigate the natural environment, their place in it and how people interact with it;
- Become aware of career options in outdoor recreation.

## **KEY CONTENT, CONCEPTS AND PROCESSES**

The key content, concepts and processes for courses in outdoor education are outlined briefly below. They describe the broad, essential elements of the subject area and indicate the components to be included in all courses based on the Course Framework.

### **Recreation and outdoor skill development**

This element of the Course Framework focuses on the acquisition of the physical and organisational skills necessary for safe and enjoyable participation in a range of outdoor recreational activities.

### **Personal and Interpersonal development**

This element of the Course Framework develops qualities which serve and strengthen the individual and establish positive and caring relationships, including working relationships.

### **Environmental awareness**

The key concept promotes understanding of and interaction with the environment and a conservation ethic.

## **ASSESSMENT**

### **Assessment Criteria for Assessment and Reporting of Student Achievement**

The following assessment criteria are a focus for assessment and reporting in all courses based on this Course Framework. Criteria are the essential qualities which teachers look for in student work. Over a unit, these criteria must be used by teachers to assess students' performance, however not all of them need to be used on each task. Assessment criteria are to be used holistically on a given task and in determining the Unit Grade.

Students will be assessed on the degree to which they demonstrate:

#### **Acquisition and Application of knowledge**

- knowledge and assessment of defining aspects of outdoor recreation;
- understanding and appreciation of the sensitive and interconnected nature of the natural environment; and
- application of key concepts.

#### **Acquisition and Application of skills**

- the ability to safely plan, organise and participate in outdoor experiences;
- application of specific cognitive and motor skills relevant to the activities undertaken;

- the ability to interact positively and effectively with others in an outdoor recreation context;
- a positive approach to the care and conservation of the natural environment including the use of minimum impact practices during outdoor activities.

### Assessment Tasks

In order to provide a common basis for moderation across colleges, assessment tasks are designed to address the assessment criteria in the Course Framework. Assessment tasks elicit the degree to which students have achieved the assessment criteria and therefore the goals a course and the units within it.

Suggested tasks to meet the task type criteria.	Theoretical	Practical
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tests</li> <li>• essay</li> <li>• assignments</li> <li>• oral</li> <li>• reports</li> <li>• diary/journal</li> <li>• portfolio/log book</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstration of skills,</li> <li>• participation in activity either through group work and/or independently</li> <li>• portfolio/log book</li> </ul>
Criteria	Acquisition and Application of knowledge	Acquisition and Application of skills
Weighting		
T/V Course	45-55%	45-55%
A Course	10-30%	70-90%

### Awarding Unit Grades

On completion of a unit of study, judgements about student achievement against the criteria outlined in this framework contribute to the unit grade decision. The Unit Grade is arrived at by decision-making based on the grade descriptors.

The grade describes the standard achieved by the student over the whole unit. The Unit Grade is given by the teacher to each student's portfolio of assessment responses as a whole. Evidence of all assessment responses on which the unit grade decision has been made is to be included in the review portfolio presented for moderation.

Unit Grades range from A to E, with A representing the highest standard and E representing the lowest standard. A to E grades are awarded on the proviso that the assessment requirements have been met.

## UNIT GRADES for T Courses A student who achieves the Grades typically

Assessment Criteria	A	B	C	D	E
Acquisition and application of skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>independently prepares for and participates in a range of outdoor activities and uses appropriate equipment and techniques at all times</li> <li>embraces challenges openly</li> <li>understands and applies appropriate risk management strategies</li> <li>plans and organises outdoor experiences taking into account all factors and alternative options</li> <li>consciously develops specific cognitive and physical skills and improves their own performance as a result of their own reflection</li> <li>demonstrates high level of teamwork and collaborative skills, is supportive of others, empathetic and sensitive</li> <li>communicates effectively in a broad range of situations</li> <li>takes on appropriate leadership tasks and roles of responsibility with maturity and gains the trust and cooperation of others</li> <li>exhibits a very high level of initiative, independence, organisation and flexibility</li> <li>demonstrates a positive and responsible attitude towards the care and conservation of the natural environment, applying minimum impact practices at all times</li> <li>confidently performs outdoor recreation skills with appropriate control, and strength</li> <li>adjusts intuitively to changing conditions</li> <li>demonstrates confidence, skills and knowledge to deal with emergencies safely and efficiently</li> <li>demonstrates effective decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prepares for and participates in a range of outdoor activities and uses appropriate equipment and techniques</li> <li>responds openly to challenges</li> <li>understands and applies appropriate risk management strategies in most situations, plans and organises outdoor experiences</li> <li>progressively develops specific cognitive and physical skills and improves their own performance as a result of their own reflection</li> <li>demonstrates good teamwork and collaborative skills, is supportive of others, empathetic and sensitive</li> <li>communicates effectively in a range of situations</li> <li>takes on leadership tasks and roles of responsibility and gains the trust and cooperation of others</li> <li>exhibits a high level of initiative, independence, organisation and flexibility</li> <li>demonstrates a positive and responsible attitude towards the care and conservation of the natural environment, applying minimum impact practices</li> <li>performs outdoor recreation skills with control, fluidity, strength, balance and rhythm</li> <li>adjusts to changing conditions</li> <li>demonstrates skills and knowledge to deal with emergencies safely and efficiently</li> <li>demonstrates effective decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prepares for and participates in a range of outdoor activities and uses appropriate equipment and techniques</li> <li>responds willingly to challenges</li> <li>understands and applies risk management strategies in most situations</li> <li>progressively develops specific cognitive and physical skills</li> <li>demonstrates teamwork and collaborative skills and is supportive of others</li> <li>communicates effectively</li> <li>takes on leadership tasks and roles of responsibility</li> <li>exhibits initiative, independence, organisation and flexibility</li> <li>demonstrates responsible attitudes towards the care and conservation of the natural environment, applying minimum impact practices</li> <li>performs outdoor recreation skills with some control, fluidity, strength, balance and rhythm</li> <li>is able to adjust to changing conditions</li> <li>demonstrates skills and knowledge to deal with emergencies safely</li> <li>demonstrates effective decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is acquiring the skills necessary to prepare for and participate in outdoor activities</li> <li>uses appropriate equipment and techniques with supervision</li> <li>applies risk management strategies when directed</li> <li>develops specific cognitive and physical skills as required</li> <li>participates actively in group activities</li> <li>communicates with others</li> <li>is developing self-reliance, organisation and flexibility</li> <li>applies minimum impact practices</li> <li>performs outdoor recreation skills with limited control, fluidity, strength, balance and rhythm</li> <li>demonstrates limited skills and knowledge to deal with emergencies safely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with supervision prepares for and participates in outdoor activities</li> <li>uses appropriate equipment and techniques when directed</li> <li>applies risk management strategies when directed</li> <li>is acquiring specific cognitive and physical skills in specific areas</li> <li>participates in group activities</li> <li>demonstrates limited communication skills</li> <li>applies minimum impact practices when directed</li> <li>is developing outdoor recreation skills</li> <li>demonstrates limited skills and knowledge to deal with emergencies safely</li> </ul>
Acquisition and application of knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>applies a comprehensive knowledge and thorough understanding of theory and concepts involved, including the nature of the natural environment and the role and the impact and management of human activity</li> <li>demonstrates extensive knowledge of the recreation industry, associated policies and procedures and an understanding and appreciation of risks and hazards</li> <li>analyses, synthesises and evaluates information from a broad range of contexts</li> <li>perceptively relates outdoor experience to other areas of life</li> <li>engages in high level discourse on complex concepts and theory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>applies very good knowledge and understanding of theory and concepts involved, including the nature of the natural environment and the role and the impact and management of human activity</li> <li>demonstrates very good knowledge of the recreation industry, associated policies and procedures and an understanding and appreciation of risks and hazards</li> <li>analyses, synthesises and evaluates information from a range of contexts</li> <li>relates outdoor experience to other areas of life</li> <li>engages in discourse on complex concepts and theory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>applies sound knowledge and understanding of theory and concepts involved, including the nature of the natural environment and the role and the impact and management of human activity</li> <li>demonstrates sound knowledge of the recreation industry, associated policies and procedures and an understanding and appreciation of risks and hazards</li> <li>locates and utilises information from a limited range of contexts</li> <li>is able to relate outdoor experience to other areas of life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of theory and concepts involved, including the nature of the natural environment and the role and the impact and management of human activity</li> <li>demonstrates limited knowledge of the recreation industry, associated policies and procedures and an understanding and appreciation of risks and hazards</li> <li>is able to locate information from a limited range of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of theory and concepts involved</li> <li>demonstrates basic knowledge of the recreation industry</li> <li>is able to locate information with assistance</li> </ul>

engages in discourse on concepts and theory

contexts

**Unit Grades for A Courses A student who achieves the Grades typically**

Assessment Criteria	A	B	C	D	E
Acquisition and application of skills	independently prepares for and participates in a range of outdoor activities responding openly to the challenges and coping thoughtfully with the risks involved; understands and uses appropriate safety measures, appropriate equipment and techniques at all times; plans and organizes outdoor experiences taking into account all factors and alternative options; consciously develops specific cognitive and physical skills; works effectively with others and independently, confidently and responsibly performing tasks and managing situations encountered; has a positive and responsible attitude towards the care and conservation of the natural environment, applying minimum impact practices at all times; takes advantage of a variety of recreational opportunities to develop skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prepares for and participates in a range of outdoor activities responding to the challenges willingly and understanding the risks involved;</li> <li>applies safety measures and uses equipment and techniques appropriate to the situation;</li> <li>plans and organizes outdoor experiences with others considering relevant factors;</li> <li>is progressively developing cognitive and physical skills through use of recreational options;</li> <li>confidently performs a range of tasks and responsibly manages situations encountered;</li> <li>demonstrates a positive attitude to the care and conservation of the environment by applying minimum impact practices during outdoor activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prepares for and participates in a range of outdoor activities responding positively to the challenges involved;</li> <li>uses appropriate equipment and techniques and applies safety measures with an appreciation of the risks involved;</li> <li>assists in the planning and organizing of outdoor activities with others and develops physical and cognitive skills covering a range of activities;</li> <li>is aware of recreational opportunities; applies minimum impact practices during outdoor activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is acquiring the organizational skills necessary to prepare for and participate in a range of outdoor activities and appreciate the risks involved;</li> <li>applies safety measures when directed; uses appropriate equipment and techniques with supervision;</li> <li>develops cognitive and physical skills as required;</li> <li>participates actively in group activities communicating with others in a range of situations;</li> <li>performs tasks with some confidence and a sense of responsibility;</li> <li>applies minimum impact practices during outdoor activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with supervision prepares for and participates in a range of outdoor activities;</li> <li>uses appropriate equipment and techniques when directed;</li> <li>is acquiring cognitive and physical skills in specific activities;</li> <li>with supervision applies minimum impact practices during outdoor activities;</li> <li>through participation in group activities is developing a sense of responsibility and confidence in performing tasks.</li> </ul>
Acquisition and application of knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has an excellent understanding of the theory and concepts involved;</li> <li>appreciates the interconnectedness of the natural environment and understands the role and impact of human activity;</li> <li>gains the trust and cooperation of others;</li> <li>communicates effectively accepting and appreciating the values and attitudes of others in a broad range of situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a very good understanding of the theory and concepts involved;</li> <li>works cooperatively with others gaining their trust and developing a sense of self reliance;</li> <li>communicates effectively with others accepting and appreciating their values and attitudes;</li> <li>has a general understanding of the natural environment and human impact on it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a good understanding of the theory and concepts involved;</li> <li>participates effectively in group activities;</li> <li>communicates clearly with others in a range of situations;</li> <li>performs a range of tasks confidently; has a positive attitude towards the care and conservation of the natural environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a reasonable understanding of the theory and concepts involved;</li> <li>is acquiring a positive attitude towards the care and conservation of the natural environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a basic understanding of the theory and concepts involved</li> </ul>

## **MODERATION**

Moderation is a system designed and implemented to:

- provide comparability in the system of school-based assessment;
- form the basis for valid and reliable assessment in senior secondary schools;
- involve the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies and colleges in cooperation and partnership; and
- maintain the quality of school-based assessment and the credibility, validity and acceptability of Board certificates.

Moderation commences within individual colleges. Teachers develop assessment programs and instruments, apply assessment criteria, and allocate Unit Grades, according to the relevant Course Framework. Teachers within course teaching groups conduct consensus discussions to moderate marking or grading of individual assessment instruments and unit grade decisions.

### **The Moderation Model**

Moderation within the ACT encompasses structured, consensus-based peer review of Unit Grades for all accredited courses, as well as statistical moderation of course scores, including small group procedures, for 'T' courses.

### **Moderation by Structured, Consensus-based Peer Review**

Review is a subcategory of moderation, comprising the review of standards and the validation of Unit Grades. In the review process, Unit Grades, determined for Year 11 and Year 12 student assessment portfolios that have been assessed in schools by teachers under accredited courses, are moderated by peer review against system wide criteria and standards. This is done by matching student performance with the criteria and standards outlined in the unit grade descriptors as stated in the Course Framework. Advice is then given to colleges to assist teachers with, and/or reassure them on, their judgments.

### **Preparation for Structured, Consensus-based Peer Review**

Towards the end of each year, for each 'A' and 'T' course offered by the school, the Semester 2 assessment portfolios of a sample of Year 11 students which, after the ordinary application of criteria, is each typical of a given Unit Grade, is sent to the ACTBSSS Secretariat. This material is considered at the first moderation day in March of the following year.

In the early part of Semester 2 each year, the same requirement applies for the Semester 1 assessment portfolios of a sample of Year 12 students. This material is considered at the second moderation day in August of the same year.

## **The College Course Presentation**

The package of materials (College Course Presentation), presented by a college for review on moderation days in each course area, will comprise the following:

- a folder containing supporting documentation, as requested by the Board Secretariat through memoranda to colleges.
- a set of student portfolios containing marked and/or graded written and non-written assessment responses and completed criteria and standards feedback forms. Evidence of all assessment responses, on which the unit grade decision has been made, is to be included in the student review portfolios. Specific requirements for subject areas and types of evidence to be presented for each moderation day will be outlined by the Board Secretariat through memoranda and Information Papers.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO KEY COMPETENCIES**

A number of work-related competencies have been accepted at national level as being important for all young Australians.

These are:

- Collecting and analysing information (KC1)
- Communicating ideas and information (KC2)
- Planning and organizing activities (KC3)
- Working with others and in teams (KC4)
- Using mathematical ideas and techniques (KC5)
- Solving problems (KC6)
- Using technology (KC7).

Teachers are encouraged to incorporate these competencies into their courses.

## **VOCATIONAL COURSES ('V' Courses)**

To conform to the National agreement on VET in Schools all 'V' courses must be written to the relevant Training Package and be supported by industry.

The 'A' or 'T' components of the course must be written to Board requirements as outlined in the current *Guidelines for the Development and Accreditation of Courses*.

All 'V' courses are required to be competency assessed. Carefully conducted assessment can serve the purposes of graded assessment (A-E) for the 'A' and 'T' components and scores for the 'T' component, as well as provide evidence of competency for the Vocational Certificate component of the course. Some competencies are supported by learning in the workplace.

## **ACROSS CURRICULUM PERSPECTIVES**

Nine Across Curriculum Perspectives have been identified by teachers as important societal and educational issues which cross curriculum boundaries. The Board has adopted these perspectives for inclusion where possible in courses of study at senior secondary level.

**The Across Curriculum Perspectives are:**

<b>Aboriginal Education and Torres Strait Islander Education</b>	<b>Australian Education</b>
<b>Environment Education</b>	<b>Work Education</b>
<b>Information Access</b>	<b>Gender Equity</b>
<b>Multicultural Education</b>	<b>Language for Understanding</b>
	<b>Special Needs Education</b>

Teachers are referred to the documents listed in the bibliography which identify the Across Curriculum Perspectives and provide advice on how to include them in all courses.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **References for Curriculum Development**

The following is a very brief list of teacher reference materials, which may be useful in developing courses based on this framework.

*A statement on health and physical education for Australian schools*, 1994, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton, Victoria.

*Health and physical education - a curriculum profile for Australian schools*, 1994, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton, Victoria.

*Health and physical education Curriculum Framework*, 1994, Department of Education and Training, Canberra, ACT.

*Guidelines for the Development and Accreditation of Courses*, ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies, Canberra ACT.

*Across Curriculum Perspectives Statement*, 1997, Department of Education and Training, Canberra, ACT.

### **Some Teacher References for Courses in Outdoor Education**

The following is a brief list of teacher reference materials, which will be useful in developing courses based on this framework.

Mandatory Procedures for Adventure Activities in Outdoor Education.

### **1993 COURSE FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

Barbara de Bruine	Teloepa High
Nora Clyde	CCEGGS
Tony Dromgool	St Clare's College
Lynne Hellyer	Erindale College
Tony McGee	Hawker College
Neil Montgomery (facilitator)	Narrabundah College
Warren Whisson	Richardson Primary
Neal Willis	Phillip College

### **1994 COURSE FRAMEWORK REVIEW GROUP**

Barbara de Bruine	Teloepa High
Neil Montgomery (facilitator)	Narrabundah College
Warren Whisson	Richardson Primary
Neil Henry	Lake Tuggeranong College
Greg Fisher	Stirling College

### **1999 COURSE FRAMEWORK REVIEW GROUP**

Lynne Hellyer	Melba High School
Ron James	Copland College

### **2000 COURSE FRAMEWORK EDITORIAL GROUP**

Year 11 & 12 Assessment & Certification Section

### **2002 COURSE FRAMEWORK REVIEW GROUP**

Peter Blunt	Lake Ginninderra College
Kathy Mann	Outdoor Education Teacher