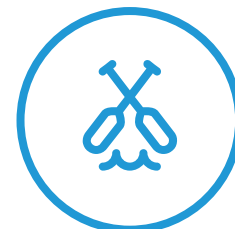


Outdoor Adventure Skills are the link between adventurous activities and the youth program. They enable youth members of all ages to access the basic skills for a range of activities, and progress through to high skill levels across nine broad activity areas. The core skill areas are what is often viewed as 'key Scouting skills' and are encouraged for all sections, whilst the specialist skill areas offer diversity of choice.



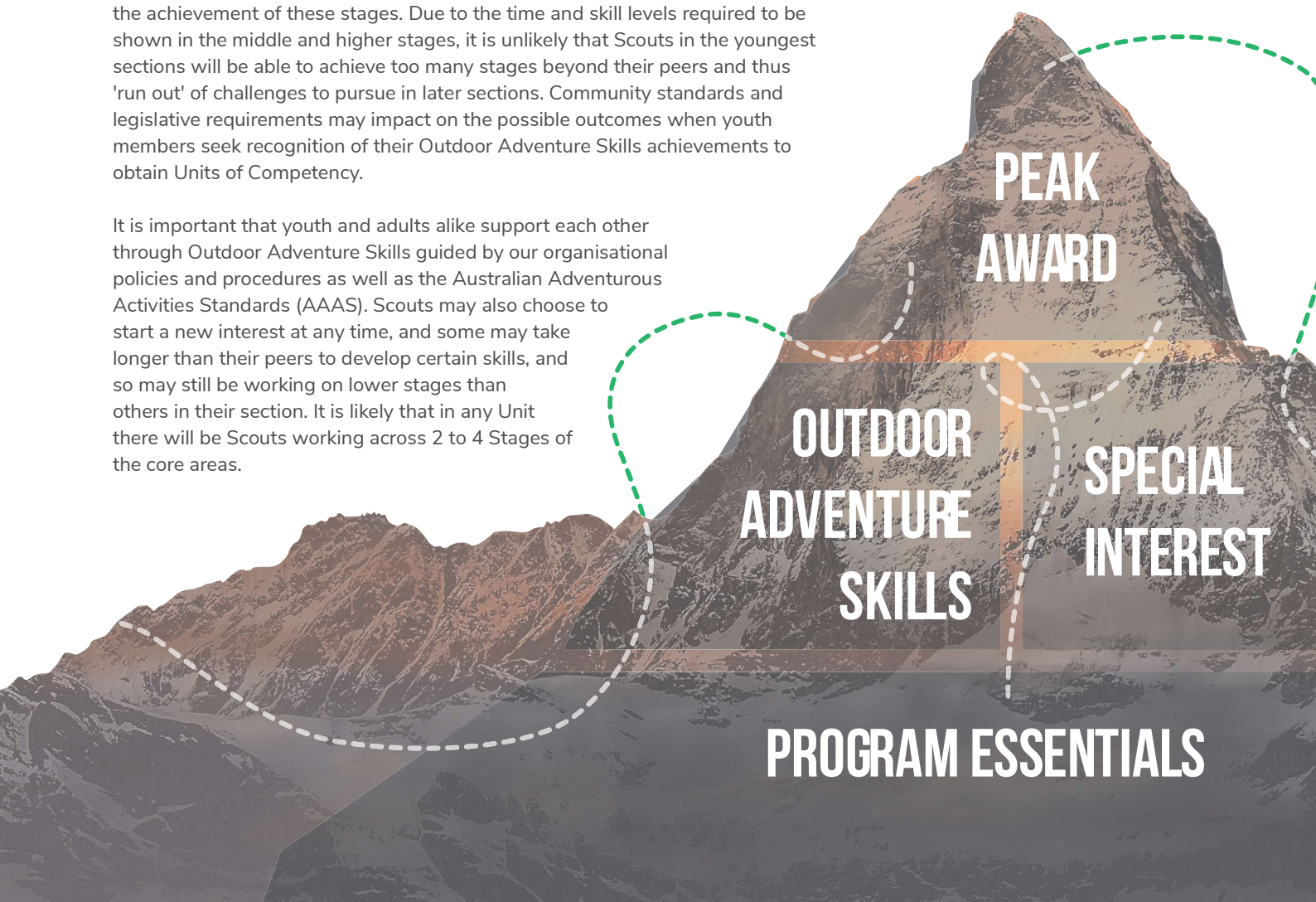
The early Stages (1–4) of all Outdoor Adventure Skills are for those who want to try out the activity and establish basic skills. The higher Stages (7–9) are geared towards the Scout who wishes to explore these pursuits in greater depth than what is provided for in the core program. Where a relevant Unit of Competency exists in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) package, Stages 5 - 9 have been written in a way that Scouts are showing skills that could be mapped to gain formal Units of Competency through Scouts Australia Institute of Training (SAIT).



The Outdoor Adventure Skills are intended to be achieved by individual Scouts. Although, as part of a balanced program and the undertaking of Challenge Areas, a Patrol or entire Unit may undertake some activities and skill development together. On any given adventure, there may be Scouts undertaking a variety of different Stages in the same group, each learning and displaying the skills that they are up to, at their own pace.

The Outdoor Adventure Skills carry through all sections. The lowest stages have been written with the younger youth members in mind, however keen or skilled Scouts in these sections can progress ahead. There are no age restrictions on the achievement of these stages. Due to the time and skill levels required to be shown in the middle and higher stages, it is unlikely that Scouts in the youngest sections will be able to achieve too many stages beyond their peers and thus 'run out' of challenges to pursue in later sections. Community standards and legislative requirements may impact on the possible outcomes when youth members seek recognition of their Outdoor Adventure Skills achievements to obtain Units of Competency.

It is important that youth and adults alike support each other through Outdoor Adventure Skills guided by our organisational policies and procedures as well as the Australian Adventurous Activities Standards (AAAS). Scouts may also choose to start a new interest at any time, and some may take longer than their peers to develop certain skills, and so may still be working on lower stages than others in their section. It is likely that in any Unit there will be Scouts working across 2 to 4 Stages of the core areas.



All Stages are written as a statement of proficiency, a Scout stating “I can” show the skill in question. Only skills that are relevant for achieving goals are included. For instance, needing to tie knots for specific purposes (rigging boats, building structures, etc) rather than knowing how to tie a knot for the sake of it. Later stages rely on the mastering of previous skills, so whilst a Scout may be signed off for a stage when they have first managed to show it and not needed explicitly to show those skills again, they are likely to need to practice it in order to learn the next stage’s skills. The “I” statements are also presented to the youth member in the context of the Plan>Do>Review> cycle to ensure a cycle of development throughout all activity areas and streams.

Core Skill Areas

Camping, Bushwalking and Bushcraft are the core skill areas. Scouts will develop their skills in camping, day and overnight hikes, first aid, construction, navigation, and survival skills. The core skill areas are those key Scouting skills that it is expected most, if not all, Scouts will have the opportunity to complete at least from Stages 1 to 5 during their time in the Movement. Most of the tasks in the core skill areas are the same skills that any Scout going on a normal Scout camp or hike would be learning, and many have been included in Scouting programs for more than 100 years. Completion of the three core skill areas to a developmentally appropriate stage is a requirement for the Peak Award in each section.

Specialist Skill Areas

Alpine, Aquatics, Boating, Cycling, Paddling and Vertical are the six specialist Outdoor Adventure Skills and break in to 21 activity streams at Stage 4 and 7. Scouts have the opportunity to select which activities they wish to do, and may start a new interest in any of these areas at any time in their Scouting journey. These broad areas each have multiple streams, separating at Stage 4 and/or Stage 7, in order to develop higher-level tailored skills. It is recognised that not all of these activity areas will be easily accessible for all members, however the diversity is available to be tailored to an individual’s interests. These skill areas are not compulsory, although youth (and young adult) members will need to complete some Stages of these skill areas in order to achieve the Peak Award across most sections.

Streams

For most of the activity areas, there are basic skills that are developed first. Then there is the option of splitting into different streams to pursue more specific activities and skills development. It is possible to complete multiple streams within the one Outdoor Adventure Skill, however only one badge (the highest) is worn. For example, a Scout has completed Stages 1–3 of general Vertical skills, and then Stages 4–6 in Abseiling. They then decide to complete Stage 4 in Caving. They should keep track of their progress in both streams, and with their Unit celebrate the achievement of that Stage, however only receive and wear the Stage 6 Vertical badge as this is their highest Stage they have earned in that area. They are now able to work on Stage 7 in Abseiling, Stage 5 in Caving and/or Stage 4 in any of the other Vertical streams, or of course to pursue the other Outdoor Adventure Skill areas. This additional progression through streams counts towards achievement of the Peak Award in each section.

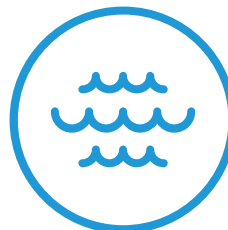


Assessment

Outdoor Adventure Skills can be supported and assessed in a two-down manner by other Scouts. 'Two-down' refers to the number of stages that must separate an assessing Scout from the Scout who is being assessed – a Scout who has completed their Stage 5 can assess others for Stages 3 or lower, for example. There are no age restrictions on this. A Scout with a higher level of skill who is younger, including from a younger section, can assess those older than them. Whilst it is often the case that the Scouts with the higher level of skill will be older than those with a lower level of skill, those younger should not be discouraged or disallowed from supporting others to achieve.

If there are no Scouts who are at the appropriate stage, or confident enough to support and assess skill development, suitably skilled adults can support/assess youth members. Adult training will upskill adults to be able to support the core Outdoor Adventure Skills for Stages 1-5, similar to the outdoor skill adult training that has been undertaken in the past. This may not be the case with many of the specialist activity areas, where Scouting adventurous activity skills courses or formal qualifications are required to facilitate activities from the commencement of the Outdoor Adventure Skills Stages.

Adult members or external Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) may be required to support / assist at the high stages, where there are significant risks involved in the activity (e.g. lead rope climbing, white water paddling) and where there are few youth members who hold the particular Stage. Branches also maintain records of adults who are qualified, according to their state laws, in more specialist skills and available to run activities and assess youth members; these are often members of the Branch Activity Teams for the activity.



For information on subject matter experts to support your group through upskilling youth members and adults, please contact your Branch Commissioner or Assistant Chief Commissioner Adventurous Activities in your relevant Branch.

Where the same skill appears in multiple areas, the Scout can be cross-accredited for that skill in multiple skill areas.

It is ideal that the youth member can demonstrate the requirements as they relate to the particular activity being focused on in a stage. For example, packing equipment differs between cycling and aquatics, and often differs even within an overarching activity like canyoning and climbing. If there has been a long time between when the skill was approved for one area and when it is being cross-accredited in another, it is important to ensure the Scout is still competent in the skill through some simple questioning or skill testing. For certifications, such as a First Aid Certificate, the certificate must still be valid. This may require the Scout to undertake a refresher course, or in some instances if they have let the certification lapse, to complete the full certificate again.

It is ideal that a youth member achieves one stage before moving to the next stage, however it is recognised that in many cases a youth member's learning will occur more fluidly and they may be learning and developing across a couple of stages. It may take longer for the person to develop some of the skills in the area than others, and their natural skill progression continues in the elements they find simple; thus they achieve some of the requirements of a higher stage before finishing the previous. It is anticipated that this will affect Scouts, Venturer Scouts and Rover Scouts more so than Joey Scouts or Cub Scouts, and some youth members may be working across 2 or even 3 stages at once.



How My Work Gets Assessed

Throughout the Outdoor Adventure Skills streams there are Plan>Do>Review> “I” statements that the youth member works through to achieve. It is ideal that the youth member achieves one stage before they move on to another, however, in many cases the youth members learning will happen fluidly and they will learn and develop their skills across stages which they can be recognised for.

When it comes to marking off the progression, individual statements within Plan>Do>Review> should be marked off by the youth member when they achieve the statement. This should occur with the guidance of their Patrol Leader, adult leader, two-up youth member or subject matter expert. It is important to remember skills should be learnt in a fun manner using the Scout Method.

The overall sign off of the completion of the Stage should be done by the Patrol Leader or Unit Council, depending on what Stage the youth member is at. More guidance on this can be found in the Outdoor Adventure Skills progression booklet or Scouts | Terrain.



Adult Requirements

It is important to note that adults still have a vital part to play in mentoring the youth members through the Outdoor Adventure Skills streams and supporting them to develop the relevant risk control measures, even if they are not to sign off on the activity. Adults still need to exercise a duty of care to the individual or Patrol partaking in their learning, however, this does not mean they always need to be present or the key person delivering to other youth members. This will require the adult to mentor youth members through the support of others.

If necessary, while the rest of the youth members in the group are progressing through the stages, an adult leader or member, who has the right level of Scouting skill or qualification for the stage they are assessing, can mark the relevant statements as complete. This may require the adults to have specific qualifications as evidence of their knowledge and currency in the particular activity area. They will also need this level of Scouting skill or qualification to deliver or run an activity in the relevant Stage.

Adults in Scouting should exercise a high appetite for continuous improvement. There are plenty of opportunities for adults to grow and develop, through Scouting and other ways, so as best to be able to support the youth program.

The adult support is also vital to assist and mentor the youth through the risk management of their activities. Especially in the Joey Scouts, Cub Scouts and Scout sections, it is vital that the adult looks over all activity paperwork that youth members have developed, just as the adult would get someone to check their work.

Further Resources

There are plenty of resources out there to support the delivery of the Outdoor Adventure Skills! They can be found at <https://pr.scouts.com.au/achievement-pathways/> or through your Branch Activities or Outdoor teams.

