



UK Outdoors
Learning · Health · Adventure



Professional Recognition

As we move towards a more coherent sector, and in order to improve the strength of our support and voice inside and outside the sector, we are creating standards to recognise the professionals within UK Outdoors member organisations.

After several years of research and consultation, this takes the sector forward towards establishing a chartered body for outdoor learning professionals.

- 1) Having professional recognition clearly benchmarked against other established professions will strengthen our lobbying and representation activity with UK and Home Nation Governments.
- 2) Professional membership of a UK Outdoors member organisation will be a required gateway for accessing pathways to individual Chartered Professional status.

Professional Recognition Benchmarks

Professional recognition distinguishes a level of education and experience working in any area of outdoor learning. It is in addition to each individuals' specialisms and qualifications, e.g. instruction/coaching awards, IOL Accreditation, association memberships, teaching and/or management qualifications, etc.

Professional recognition also brings expectations and responsibilities including a commitment to safe, ethical practice, evidence of completing CPD annually and being up-to-date and connected to current good practice.

<p>Associate Professional Recognition</p> <p>One years' outdoor learning work experience plus relevant qualifications.</p>	<p>Professional Recognition</p> <p>Five years' outdoor learning work experience plus relevant qualifications.</p>
<p>Suitable qualifications at RQF/CQFW Level 3 / SQCF Level 6 or higher**</p> <p>e.g. Outdoor Activity Instructor Apprenticeship, Mountain Leader Award, Forest School Leader, etc.</p> <p>Statements of support confirming experience in instructing / leading / coaching in any outdoor activity.</p>	<p>Suitable qualifications at RQF/CQFW Level 5 / SQCF Level 8 or higher**</p> <p>e.g. First Degree, Masters Degree, Diploma in Management, etc.</p> <p>Statements of support confirming experience as an outdoor learning specialist, manager or advisor - or the teaching / development of the workforce.</p>

** Requirements for equivalent qualifications and experience are in development.



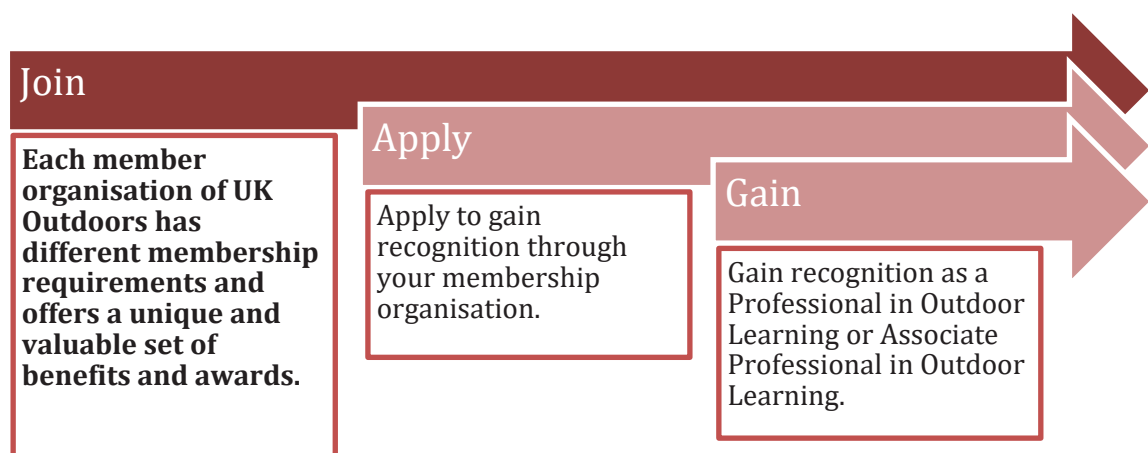
Professional Recognition Process

Attaining professional recognition will further demonstrate your commitment to professional practice and your own continued professional development.

UK Outdoors Member Organisations offering Professional Recognition

- Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL)
- Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC)

Each member organisation of UK Outdoors will offer professional recognition to existing members following the same requirements and process.



Depending on your eligibility, you may need to:

- Provide details of your outdoor learning work experience (template provided)
- Provide statements of support that confirm your experience (template provided for signature by peer or senior manager)
- Provide copies of certificates of relevant qualifications at the required level
- Provide evidence of an equivalent, existing professional membership at the level, e.g. Full membership of AHOEC.

It is envisaged that Professional Recognition will define an individual's membership level of UK Outdoors as organisations with our sector come together.

Associate Professional in Outdoor Learning

Recognition as an associate professional demonstrates you have experience working in outdoor learning and a commitment to professionalism and your own continued professional development.

- Benchmark your level of knowledge, skills and education to lead outdoor learning sessions*
- Help improve the strength of our representation and voice inside and outside the sector*
- Demonstrate your experience to customers and employers, and the value you bring*

Application requirements

<i>Application route:</i>	<i>You will need:</i>
RPIOL or APIOL award holder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form • IOL will check their records to confirm your RPIOL or APIOL award
Suitable qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form • Statement of support that confirms your experience • Copies of certificates of suitable qualifications

How to apply

To apply you need to be a current member of the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL) or the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC). Apply at:

- <https://www.outdoor-learning.org/Good-Practice/Develop-as-a-Professional/Professional-Development-CPD/Professional-Recognition>
- <https://ahoec.org/professional-recognition/>



Associate Professional Recognition Requirements

Associate Professional Application Routes

AP ROUTE 1 RPIOL or APIOL award	AP ROUTE 2 Suitable qualification
Copy of RPIOL or APIOL award certificate	One statement of support that confirms your experience
	Copy of certificate of a suitable qualification
Self-declaration of suitable experience on application form	

Suitable experience:

Associate professionals in outdoor learning have a total of at least one years' experience delivering outdoor learning that enables them to:

- 1) Lead safe and engaging outdoor learning sessions**
- 2) Organise resources and deliver within agreed programmes**
- 3) Prepare for and achieve planned outcomes**

Work experience can be full time, part role or volunteer in any area of outdoor learning as an instructor, facilitator, teacher, coach, etc. in any outdoor activity.

Statement of support:

The Statement of Support confirms that you meet the experience requirements and a fellow professional supports your application for professional recognition.

It should be signed by an employer, client or colleague working at your level or above and able to offer a reliable opinion of your knowledge and experience.

Suitable qualifications:

All qualifications and awards that are directly relevant to your work in outdoor learning and are listed on the RQF/CQFW at Level 3 / SQCF at Level 6 or higher may be suitable.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Outdoor Activity Instructor Apprenticeship
- Rock Climbing Instructor Award (MTE Level 3 Qualification on QCF)
- Lowland Leader Award (MTE Level 3 Qualification on QCF)
- Mountain Leader Award (MTE Level 3 Qualification on QCF)
- Level 3 Forest School Leader
- Pearson BTEC Diploma in Sport and Outdoor Activities

IOL recognised qualifications and awards aligned to Outdoor Activity Instructor Occupational Standard at Level 3 can be [found here](#).



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Review of Professional Recognition Applications

Submissions will be reviewed by an application review team against these requirements.

Where necessary, a professional recognition panel (drawn from IOL and AHOEC membership) will guide the application review team in making decisions about whether applicants have provided valid and sufficient evidence to achieve professional recognition.

If required, additional information will be requested from applicants before a decision is reached.

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance process for professional recognition will be managed by the IOL Professional Standards Manager.



Associate Professional Application

Associate Professional recognition is open to existing individual members of a UK Outdoors member organisation. New members should first join as a member of their chosen organisation then apply for professional recognition.

Applicant name:

Individual member of: IOL AHOEC

Membership number:

Primary role in Outdoor Learning – please tick one

Outdoor Learning Specialist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manager of Outdoor Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Workforce / Profession Developer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Instructors, Facilitators, Teachers, Coaches, etc.		Leaders, Managers, Advisors, etc.		Trainers, Lecturers, Researchers, etc.	

Application route – please select one

APR Route 1

I hold an RPIOL or APIOL Award

IOL will check their records to confirm your RPIOL or APIOL

APR Route 2

I attach a copy of a suitable qualification at RQF/CQFW Level 3 / SQCF Level 6 or higher

I attach a statement of support for my application *(Completed by line manager or equivalent)*

I commit to safe, ethical practice and agree to abide by my member organisations Code of Professional Conduct

I agree to provide evidence of completing CPD annually and being up-to-date and connected to current good practice

I confirm that I have a total of at least one years' experience delivering outdoor learning plus relevant learning enabling me to:

- 1) **Lead safe and engaging outdoor learning sessions**
- 2) **Organise resources and deliver within agreed programmes**
- 3) **Prepare for and achieve planned outcomes**

Work experience can be full time, part role or volunteer in any area of outdoor learning as an instructor, facilitator, teacher, coach, etc. in any outdoor activity.

Signature:

Date:

I consent for my name to be listed on a public register of Associate Professionals in Outdoor Learning

Data is collected for the purposes of administering this application only. [IOL](#) or AHOEC may contact you to verify authenticity but you will not be contacted for marketing or any other purposes.



Statement of Support

Associate Professional Recognition

The requirements for Associate Professional Recognition include:

- Evidence of one years' outdoor learning work experience plus suitable qualifications at RQF/CQFW Level 3 / SQCF Level 6 or higher (or equivalent)
- Statement of support that confirms experience
- A commitment to safe, ethical practice through agreeing to abide by your member organisations code of professional conduct.
- Provide evidence of completing CPD annually and be up-to-date and connected to current good practice.

Confirmation of experience

Associate professionals in outdoor learning have a total of at least one years' experience delivering outdoor learning to enable them to:

- 1) Lead safe and engaging outdoor learning sessions**
- 2) Organise resources and deliver within agreed programmes**
- 3) Prepare for and achieve planned outcomes**

Work experience can be full time, part role or volunteer in any area of outdoor learning as an instructor, facilitator, teacher, coach, etc. in any outdoor activity.

Applicants name:

I can confirm that to the best of my knowledge the applicant named above meets the experience requirements and I can therefore support their application for Associate Professional recognition.

Supporter name:

An employer, client or colleague working at your level or above and able to offer a reliable opinion of your knowledge and experience

Relationship to applicant:

Email:

Signature:

Date:

Professional in Outdoor Learning

Recognition as a professional in outdoor learning values your experience and will further demonstrate your commitment to professionalism and continued professional development.

- Benchmark your knowledge, skills and education at a level matched to other professions*
- Achieve the gateway for accessing future pathways to individual Chartered Professional status*
- Demonstrate your level of experience to customers and employers, and the value you bring*
- Help improve the strength of our representation and voice inside and outside the sector*

Application requirements

<i>Application route:</i>	<i>You will need:</i>
APIOL or LPIOL award holder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Form • Statement of Support that confirms your experience • Copy of certificate(s) of a suitable qualification <u>or</u> Statement of Equivalent Learning
Member of AHOEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Form • Statement of Support that confirms your experience • Copy of certificate(s) of a suitable qualification <u>or</u> Statement of Equivalent Learning
Statement of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Form • Statement of Experience listing your outdoor learning roles • Statement of Support that confirms your experience • Copy of certificate(s) of a suitable qualification <u>or</u> Statement of Equivalent Learning

How to apply

To apply you need to be a current member of the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL) or the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC). Apply at:

- <https://www.outdoor-learning.org/Good-Practice/Develop-as-a-Professional/Professional-Development-CPD/Professional-Recognition>
- <https://ahoec.org/professional-recognition/>

Professional Recognition Requirements

Professional Recognition Application Routes

PR ROUTE 1	PR ROUTE 2	PR ROUTE 3
Suitable qualification PLUS APIOL or LPIOL award	Suitable qualification PLUS member of AHOEC	Suitable qualification PLUS statement of experience
One statement of support that confirms your experience	One statement of support that confirms your experience	List of outdoor learning roles, responsibilities and dates
Copies of certificates of suitable qualifications or statement of equivalent learning	Copies of certificates of suitable qualifications or statement of equivalent learning	One statement of support that confirms your experience
		Copies of certificates of suitable qualifications or statement of equivalent learning
Self-declaration of suitable experience on application form		

Suitable experience:

Professionals in outdoor learning have a total of at least five years' experience in a position of responsibility for outdoor learning that enables them to:

- 1) **Shape effective outdoor learning** and exercise autonomy and judgement
- 2) **Build programmes of learning** using purposeful and planned outdoor experiences
- 3) **Think and operate medium / long term** planning and developing courses of action
- 4) **Positively influence colleagues** and role model professional and reflective practice
- 5) **Deliver value to customers and the profession** by addressing complex problems

Experience may be full time, part role or volunteer in any area of outdoor learning, as either a practitioner or academic, and include the responsibilities of one or more of:

Outdoor Learning Specialist Facilitators, Practitioners, Teachers, Coaches, etc.	Manager of Outdoor Learning Leaders, Managers, Advisors, etc.	Workforce / Profession Developer Trainers, Lecturers, Researchers, etc.
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Statement of support:

The Statement of Support confirms that you meet the experience requirements and a fellow professional supports your application for professional recognition.

It should be signed by an employer, client or colleague working at your level or above and able to offer a reliable opinion of your knowledge and experience.

Suitable qualifications:

All qualifications and awards that are directly relevant to your work in outdoor learning and are at RQF/CQFW Level 5 / SQCF Level 8 or higher may be suitable.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- First or Higher Degrees in Outdoor Adventure Leadership, Outdoor Adventure Education, Geography, Environmental Science, etc.
- Level 5 Certificate / Diploma in Management and Leadership, Level 5 Certificate / Diploma in Effective Coaching and Mentoring, etc.



- Post Graduate Certificate in Education, Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training, etc.

Suitable qualifications should include a period of learning (total qualification time) sufficient to gain the breadth and depth of knowledge, thinking and understanding required to support professional competence in outdoor learning.

Statement of equivalent learning:

Equivalent learning can be recognised for those NOT holding a suitable qualification as above.

A Statement of Equivalent Learning should demonstrate relevant knowledge, thinking and understanding at least equivalent to RQF/CQFW Level 5 or SQCF at Level 8. It is in two parts:

- 1) Professional Development Record (signed by a Supporter)
- 2) Personal Statement

A Statement of Equivalent Learning should show that applicants:

- Have gained practical, theoretical or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or area of work in order to apply your skills across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts.
- Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information, concepts and ideas in order to address broadly defined, complex problems
- Are able to take responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that initiate or underpin substantial changes or developments
- Can initiate and lead complex tasks and processes, taking responsibility, where relevant for the work and roles of others and the allocation of substantial resources

Level descriptors can be found here: www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/1538/occupational-levels-guidance.pdf

Review of Professional Recognition Applications

Submissions will be reviewed by an application review team against these requirements.

Where necessary, a professional recognition panel (drawn from IOL and AHOEC membership) will guide the application review team in making decisions about whether applicants have provided valid and sufficient evidence to achieve professional recognition.

If required, additional information will be requested from applicants before a decision is reached.

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance process for professional recognition will be managed by the IOL Professional Standards Manager.



Professional Recognition Application

Professional recognition is open to existing individual members of a UK Outdoors member organisation. New members should first join as a member of their chosen organisation then apply for professional recognition.

Applicant name:

Individual member of: IOL AHOEC

Membership number:

Primary role in Outdoor Learning – please tick one

Outdoor Learning Specialist	Manager of Outdoor Learning	Workforce / Profession Developer
Instructors, Facilitators, Teachers, Coaches, etc. <input type="checkbox"/>	Leaders, Managers, Advisors, etc. <input type="checkbox"/>	Trainers, Lecturers, Researchers, etc. <input type="checkbox"/>

Application route – please tick one

I hold an APIOL or LPIOL award I am a full member of AHOEC Statement of experience completed and attached

I attach a copy of a qualification at RQF/CQFW Level 5 / SQCF Level 8 or higher or a Statement of Equivalent Learning

I commit to safe, ethical practice and agree to abide by my member organisations Code of Professional Conduct

I agree to provide evidence of completing CPD annually and being up-to-date and connected to current good practice

I confirm that I have a total of at least five years' outdoor learning experience in a position of responsibility plus relevant learning that enables me to:

- 1) **Shape effective outdoor learning** and exercise autonomy and judgement
- 2) **Build programmes of learning** using purposeful and planned outdoor experiences
- 3) **Think and operate medium / long term** planning and developing courses of action
- 4) **Positively influence colleagues** and role model professional and reflective practice
- 5) **Deliver value to customers and the profession** by addressing complex problems

I attach a statement of support for my application

Completed by employer, client or colleague working at your level or above, and able to offer a reliable opinion of your knowledge and experience.

Signature:

Date:

I consent for my name to be listed on a public register of Professionals in Outdoor Learning

Data is collected for the purposes of administering this application only. [IOL](#) or AHOEC may contact you to verify authenticity but you will not be contacted for marketing or any other purposes.

Statement of Support

Professional Recognition

The requirements for Professional Recognition include:

- Evidence at least five years' outdoor learning experience in a position of responsibility plus suitable qualifications at RQF/CQFW Level 5 / SQCF Level 8 or higher (or equivalent)
- Statements of support that confirm experience
- A commitment to safe, ethical practice through agreeing to abide by your member organisations code of professional conduct.
- Provide evidence of completing CPD annually and be up-to-date and connected to current good practice.

Confirmation of experience

Professional in outdoor learning have a total of at least five years' outdoor learning experience in a position of responsibility plus relevant learning that enables them to:

- 1) **Shape effective outdoor learning** and exercise autonomy and judgement
- 2) **Build programmes of learning** using purposeful and planned outdoor experiences
- 3) **Think and operate medium / long term** planning and developing courses of action
- 4) **Positively influence colleagues** and role model professional and reflective practice
- 5) **Deliver value to customers and the profession** by addressing complex problems

Experience may be full time, part role or volunteer in any area of outdoor learning, as either a practitioner or academic, and include the responsibilities of one or more of:

Outdoor Learning Specialist

Instructors, Facilitators,
Teachers, Coaches, etc.

Manager of Outdoor Learning

Leaders, Managers,
Advisors, etc.

Workforce / Profession Developer

Trainers, Lecturers,
Researchers, etc.

Applicants name:

I can confirm that to the best of my knowledge the applicant named above meets the experience requirements and I can therefore support their application for professional recognition.

Supporter name:

An employer, client or colleague working at your level or above and able to offer a reliable opinion of your knowledge and experience

Relationship to applicant:

Email:

Signature:

Date:

Statement of Experience

Statement of experience in support of an application for Professional Recognition

Applicants name:

Statement of experience

Beginning with your most recent role, please complete with details of your primary outdoor learning role(s) covering a total of at least five years' work experience at this level.

Experience may be from full time, part role or voluntary work in any area of outdoor learning as either a practitioner or academic. Where it is not obvious from the job title, please also describe the key responsibilities in order for us to review your experience in:

- 1) **Shaping effective outdoor learning** and exercising autonomy and judgement
- 2) **Building programmes of learning** using purposeful and planned outdoor experiences
- 3) **Thinking and operating medium / long term** - planning and developing courses of action
- 4) **Positively influencing colleagues** and role model professional and reflective practice
- 5) **Delivering value to customers and the profession** by addressing complex problems

Date from	Date to	Organisation	Outdoor Learning Role (and responsibilities)
	Current role		

Signature:

Date:

Statement of Equivalent Learning

Statement of equivalent learning in support of an application for Professional Recognition. This form is for applicants that DO NOT hold a relevant qualification listed on the RQF/CQFW at Level 5 or higher, or SQCF at Level 8 or higher

Applicants name:

1

Professional Development Record

To show learning in order to gain relevant knowledge, thinking and understanding.

This might include a selection of formal training courses as well as self-led CPD reading, research or study. Examples of supporting awards include (but are not limited to):

- Accredited Practitioner of the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL)
- Leading Practitioner of the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL)
- Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor (MTUK&I)
- RYA Yachtmaster Coastal / Offshore (RYA)
- Cave Instructor Certificate (BCA)
- British Canoeing Coaching Diploma (BC)

Examples of development areas and the range of CPD activities that could be included can be found in the IOL 7 Steps to CPD full guide. www.outdoor-learning.org/Good-Practice/Develop-as-a-Professional/7-Steps-to-CPD.

Date(s)	Professional Development Activity	Relevance to the Professional Recognition requirements

I can confirm that to the best of my knowledge the applicant named above has relevant knowledge, thinking and understanding at RQF/CQFW Level 5 or higher, or SQCF Level 8 or higher.

Supporter signature:

An employer, client or colleague working at your level or above and able to offer a reliable opinion of your knowledge, thinking and understanding



2

Personal Statement

To demonstrate application of relevant knowledge, thinking and understanding

Describe your range of experience over the last 5 years and areas where you have applied learning gained on formal training courses, or CPD reading, research or study to:

- 1) **Shaping effective outdoor learning** and exercising autonomy and judgement
- 2) **Building programmes of learning** using purposeful and planned outdoor experiences
- 3) **Thinking and operating medium / long term** - planning and developing courses of action
- 4) **Positively influencing colleagues** and role model professional and reflective practice
- 5) **Delivering value to customers and the profession** by addressing complex problems

Signature:

Date: