

Chapter 9

ACTIVITIES

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A list of available guidance on activities is contained in the a-z directory of activities available at [Scouts.org.uk/A-Z](https://scouts.org.uk/A-Z).

Further advice may be available from District and County Activity Advisers, details of which may be available from your Assistant County Commissioner (Activities). You may also contact Headquarters via the Scout Information Centre. In addition to the factsheets stated, others may be available to provide guidance in activity areas.

Rule 9.1 Activity Rules – Application

- a. These Rules apply to all activities carried out anywhere in the world.
- b. The District Commissioner is responsible for approving all activities for Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts and Explorer Scouts. This will usually be by means of an informal system agreed between the District Commissioner and each Group Scout Leader or District Explorer Scout Commissioner.
- c. For Scout Network the relevant Commissioner is responsible for approving all activities for Scout Network Members at that level, i.e. a District Commissioner for District Scout Network Activities and the County Commissioner for County Scout Network Activities. This will usually be by means of an informal system agreed between the District Scout Network Commissioner, Assistant County Commissioner Scout Network or County Commissioner. ^{SV}
- d. The relevant District or County Commissioner is responsible for approving all activities for groups of adults (i.e. where each individual is aged 18 and over). This will usually be by means of an informal system agreed between the relevant Commissioner and the County Scout Network Commissioner (in respect of Scout Network), Scout Active Support Manager (in respect of Scout Active Support) or other person recognised by the relevant Commissioner. ^{SV}

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- e. For special events and activities approval must be granted by a County, Regional or Chief Commissioner, as appropriate.
- f. For safety reasons **only**, the District or County Commissioner (or their representatives) of the area where the activity takes place has an overriding authority (in consultation with the home Commissioner) to direct that any activity should be postponed, stopped or cancelled.

Please refer to [Rule 7.3](#).

- g. There are additional requirements for the District/County Commissioners approval for those activities which fall within the scope of the Association's Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme.
- h. When professional instructors or leaders from outside the Movement are engaged separate rules apply (see [Rule 9.9](#)).
- i. *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.2 Preparations

- a. Prior to every activity the Leader must ensure that:
 - it has been approved by the relevant District/County Commissioner;
 - if necessary, they - or another member of the party - holds a permit in accordance with the Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme (see [Rule 9.7](#));
 - it is the leader holding the permit who takes all decisions for the duration of the activity;
 - there is additional, responsible supervision as required (including for those in the locality of the activity but not actively involved, see Rules 3.7-3.9), all supervising adults and participants are made aware of who is in charge;
 - suitable InTouch arrangements (see [Rule 9.3](#)) and Emergency Procedures (Chapter 7) are in place;
 - it is appropriate to the age and abilities of all participants;
 - each participant has received appropriate training;
 - an appropriate weather forecast is obtained and acted upon in terms of selecting the area in which the activity will operate and that each participant is suitably equipped to tackle predicted/possible extremes;
 - all equipment is appropriate for the activity;
 - any other requirements of The Scout Association, including Child Protection and Safety, have been complied with;
 - any legal requirements for the activity have been complied with;
 - a risk assessment is carried out in accordance with [Rule 9.4](#). Risk Assessment and safety instructions are communicated to all supervising adults and participants;
 - suitable first aid materials are available.

Rule 9.3 InTouch

- a. For all Scouting activities each party must implement an 'InTouch' system.

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b. Details of what this needs to include are contained in the factsheet [FS120075 InTouch](#) and at scouts.org.uk/intouch.

Rule 9.4 Risk Assessment

- a. Leaders must carry out risk assessments before and during every activity.
- b. All activities must be undertaken in accordance with the Association's Safety Policy (see Chapter 2) and adhere to the relevant general and specific activity rules set out in Chapter 9 - Activities.

Further details are contained in the factsheet [FS120000 Activities – Risk Assessment](#) and at scouts.org.uk/safety.

Rule 9.5 Emergency Procedure

Please refer to Chapter 7 Emergency Procedures

Rule 9.6 Large Scale Events

- a. Where an adventurous activity involves 100 or more people, the activity must be specially approved by the home District or County Commissioner(s) and advance notice in writing must be given to the host County Commissioner(s) at least two months before the event, together with the following details:
 - the numbers and age ranges of those involved;
 - the names and addresses of the responsible Leaders;
 - the outline programme;
 - the proposed location(s);
 - the proposed transport arrangements, including those to be used during the event;
 - the proposed method of liaison with local landowners.
- b. In all such cases involving the activities covered in this chapter, the organisers must:
 - carry out a risk assessment;
 - consider and document the arrangement for the supervision of participants and the procedures to be used in the event of an emergency;
 - submit a safety plan to the home District or County Commissioner(s) for approval.
- c. For large scale adventurous activities where alternative written safety procedures are in place the County Commissioner, in consultation with the relevant County Activity Adviser, may agree to an alternative system of supervision, checking and control of participating groups.

Rule 9.7 Adventurous Activities Permit Scheme

- a. These rules apply to all adventurous activities.

Adventurous activities are:

- archery;
- caving;
- climbing and abseiling, except;
 - bouldering;

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- climbs using auto belay systems (systems that lower a climber to the ground without any human intervention);
 - hill walking and off road cycling (in Terrain One and Two);
 - hovercrafting;
 - snowsports (except artificial slopes and nursery slopes);
 - all water activities, except swimming, on class B1, B2, B3 or A waters;
 - all motorised water activities and SCUBA activities on class C waters.
- b. Members or associate members of Scouting wishing to run any adventurous activity must hold the appropriate activity permit where any member of the activity group is under the age of 18 or those Scout Network members with additional needs that places their mental capacity and understanding as below the age of 18. For joint activities with under and over 18 members the activity permit scheme applies. Where these activities are being run by non-members, see Rule 9.9 Use of External Centres and Instructors.

Note: This rule also applies to staff and employees operating on behalf of The Scout Association (or any Group, District, County or Country thereof).

- c. A Commissioner issues a permit on the recommendation of an assessor and in accordance with the process and content of the factsheet [FS120103 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme – Commissioners' Guide](#).
- d. Permits can be granted for leadership, supervisory and personal. Details of which are available for each activity can be found in the factsheet [FS120100 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme](#). The remit of each permit can be found in the appropriate factsheet for the specific activity, although all permits can have additional restrictions placed on them based on the skills and experience of the permit holder.
- e. There is no minimum or maximum age to hold a leadership or supervisory permit (except any imposed by outside agencies). There is no minimum age to hold a personal permit, but the maximum age is 17.
- f. Recommendations for permits may be made by County assessors or external assessors in accordance with the factsheet [FS120104 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme – Approved Assessors](#).
- g. Permits must have an expiry date of not more than five years. When a permit expires the permit holder must apply for, be assessed for and be granted a new permit before they are able to run the activity again.
- h. Where a leadership or supervisory permit holder is under 18 their permit will expire on their 18th birthday if the required safeguarding checks for an adult holding a permit have not been carried out. When they turn 18 they can be granted a new permit, once the required safeguarding checks have been carried out, without the need for another assessment, to expire no longer than five years after their initial permit was granted.

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- i. All groups undertaking adventurous activities must have immediate access to someone holding a relevant and current first aid qualification. This need not be the permit holder. The detail of the first aid skills required will be identified by the risk assessment, but the minimum qualifications (or equivalents) are:
- A full first aid certificate as defined at [FS120052](#) is required for all remote activities, where travelling time is 3 hours or more (in the method of travel being used) to a point of refuge including;
 - a road which carries a normal road-going ambulance
 - a building which is occupied (such as a farm or harbour);
 - or another means of calling help (such as a telephone box)
 - First Response is required for all other adventurous activities.

NOTE: Rule 9.7 is now for implementation by Counties by 31 December 2020. During this time, where the revised processes have not been implemented locally, reference should be made to Rule 9.7 October 2018 version of POR.

- j. Once holding a permit an activity leader may operate with Members from another District or County (subject to the normal approval of the District/County Commissioner of the Members concerned).
- k. When a permit holder leaves Scouting their permit(s) will automatically expire on the date that they leave.
- l. Where a permit holder is not following the activity rules or running the activity in an unsafe manner, their Commissioner may review and further restrict or cancel their permit.
- m. Each County is required to carry out a self- moderation of their management of the adventurous activity permit scheme by the end of each January in accordance with the details in [FS120106 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme – Moderation](#).
- n. The County Commissioner is responsible for;
- agreeing the County self- moderation as an accurate record;
 - ensuring action plans are in place where any minimum standards are not met;
 - ensuring any agreed action plans are carried out.
- o. Where a County is selected for national sampling of their self- moderation they need to send their completed County self- moderation form to the UK Activities Team at Gilwell Park before the end of February.

Rule 9.8 Adult Groups in Adventurous Activities

- a. An adventurous activity is defined in Rule 9.7a.
- b. Where any participant in the activity group is aged under 18, Rule 9.7 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme will apply. Rule 9.7 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme may also be applicable to groups with network Members aged over 18 years, with additional needs, disabilities or life-limiting conditions who have additional support to access Scouting.

Note: for Network members aged 18-25 years who are unable to independently understand and/or sign an acknowledgement of risk and consent form, please contact Scout Insurance Services for further guidance.

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- c. Rules within Chapter 9 regarding adventurous activities should be taken as guidance except Rules 9.3 – 9.6, 9.9, 9.12 and 9.64 (except a) which must be followed irrespective of age.
- d. Any activity that is banned applies to all age groups.
- e. Each activity must have a co-ordinator.
- f. Each participant must sign an acknowledgement of risk statement and have read the guidance set out in the fact sheet [FS120087 Adult Groups in Adventurous Activities](#).

Rule 9.9 Use of External Centres and Instructors

Delivery of activities using an external provider can enrich the programme, but a number of factors require consideration. This rule intends to provide a structure to support leaders in making informed decisions about the suitability of external providers.

- a. When external providers are used for the delivery of activities for members of The Scout Association the external provider must hold a relevant accreditation or qualification for the activity they are delivering (e.g. AALA Licence, Adventure Mark Accredited Provider, Government Agency, National Governing Body qualifications) as well as adequate insurance cover. These criteria are subject to frequent change and up to date guidance on the above can be found in the A-Z directory at scouts.org.uk/a-z.

As the standards and criteria for the delivery of activities overseas are very varied it is not possible to provide specific guidance for each country and activity. Leaders therefore need to check the suitability of providers themselves and this rule supports that process with additional guidance.

- b. When using external providers overseas, the guidance for activities overseas must be followed (scouts.org.uk FS120085). If the leader in charge feels that the activity is not safe then the activity should be stopped immediately.

Rule 9.10 Air Activities – General

- a. Rules 9.11-9.13 apply to all forms of air experience flying and flying instruction undertaken by Members of the Movement.

Rule 9.11 Access to Airfields

- a. Before any Member of the Movement proceeds on to any private, civil or Service airfield the permission of the controlling body of the airfield must be obtained.
- b. Any individual or party must be briefed as detailed in [FS120702 Access to Airfields](#).
- c. The above rules do not apply when visits to civil airports are confined to the spectators' enclosure or to Service establishments and civil airfields on open days or at air shows when using public enclosures.

Rule 9.12 Air Activities - Public Liability Insurance and Pilot and Aircraft Requirements

- a. The pilot must comply with the Air Navigation Order, Rules of the Air, Joint Aviation Requirements – Operations and any EASA Regulations supplementing or replacing them for licensing, medical and class/type ratings.

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- b. The aircraft must comply with the Air Navigation Order, Joint Aviation Requirements – Operations and any EASA Regulations supplementing or replacing them for registration and maintenance (or the requirements of the Light Aircraft Association, the British Gliding Association and the British Microlight Aircraft Association to the extent that authority for such matters has been delegated to them).
- c. The aircraft operator is required to either;
- hold an Aviation Liability Insurance policy with a Combined Single Limit in respect of Third Party and Passenger Liability complying with the requirements of EC Regulation 785/2004 as enacted by The Civil Aviation (Insurance) Regulations 2005 or any amendment or replacement thereof, or
 - hold an Aviation Liability Insurance policy with a Split Liability complying with the requirements of EC Regulation 785/2004 as enacted by The Civil Aviation (Insurance) Regulations 2005 or any amendment or replacement thereof in respect to Third Party Liability and having a minimum in respect of Passenger Liability of 1 million pounds.

In either case where the aircraft is a helicopter the Passenger Liability limit must be to a minimum Level of 5 million pounds.

Suggested Endorsement: *“It is hereby noted that this policy includes the interest of The Scout Association as an additional insured in respect of flights involving members of the Scout Movement.”*

Where this endorsement is not in place an indemnity to Principal Clause should be contained within their policy documentation. Further support regarding this can be obtained from Unity Insurance.

- d. All members undertaking Air Activities (including hovercrafting) are required to notify the Scout Information Centre (by phone or via www.scouts.org.uk/airnotifications) beforehand or immediately after the activity takes place.

Rule 9.13 Flight Briefings

- a. Any Member of the Movement engaged in any flying activity must be given prior instruction in:
- the use of the aircraft safety harness and other safety equipment;
 - the purpose of the flight, the sensations likely to be experienced and the method of clearing the ears on ascent and descent.
 - the emergency evacuation procedures including the use of an emergency parachute where appropriate.

Rule 9.14 Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Drones

This rule refers to unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and drones.

These are defined as aircraft without pilots on board and fall within two categories based on the way they are controlled:

UAVs are flown via a remote control and are limited by the range of the transmitter, this includes all remote controlled aerial devices such as model aeroplanes and helicopters, including devices

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commonly referred to as drones but operating under remote control. These devices may be electric or petrol powered.

Drones are devices which are programmable and/or automated (using an on board computer system).

All activities involving UAV's must follow the regulations set out by the Civil Aviation Authority.

- a. Scout led use of drones is not permitted and is not insured by The Scout Association. Members may only take part in activities using automated drones if this activity is operated by an external provider with appropriate aviation insurance cover.
- b. Members may use UAVs which are operated using a remote control.
- c. When operating UAVs, members must ensure that the site chosen for this activity is appropriate, consideration must be made to proximity to airfields and other similar environments as well as overhead power lines, nature reserves and/or private property.
- d. Permission must be granted from the owner of the land and/or property that will be under the planned flightpath of the UAV, especially where images are being captured.

If uncertain about the insurance requirements when operating using UAVs and/or drones please contact Unity (Scout Insurance Services).

Rule 9.15 *This rule is intentionally left blank.*

Rule 9.16 Powered Aircraft Flying

- a. Powered Flying involving payment (in accordance with the current Air Navigation Order:
 - the flight must be provided by an Air Operators Certificate holder or;
 - if the flight is of an instructive nature, it must be under the supervision of a flying instructor holding a valid JAR – FCL Flight Instructor Rating (or Part-FCL equivalent) or a European Aviation Safety Agency Licence at a Civil Aviation Authority Registered Training Facility or European Aviation Safety Agency equivalent.
 - the age, weight and maturity of the Scout Member under training must be considered by the Chief Flying Instructor (or their delegated representative) of the facility providing the instruction.
 - any Scout Members who are observers in passenger seats must not pay anything.
- b. Powered Flying where no payment is involved.

The requirement for pilot experience level is at least 200 hours total of which 100 hours are as pilot in command of an aircraft including;

- at least 20 hours as pilot in command of an aircraft of the same type as that being used to carry Scout Members of which at least 3 hours must have been within the preceding 90 days; and
- at least 3 take offs and 3 landings as the sole manipulator of the controls of an aeroplane of the same type as that being used to carry Scout Members within the preceding 30 days.

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- c. Motor / Self launching glider flights must be under the supervision of a flying instructor holding a British Gliding Association Motor Gliding Instructor Rating or a Flight Instructor (SLMG) Rating at a British Gliding Association registered club. Age, weight and maturity of the Scout member under training must be considered by the Chief Flying Instructor (or their delegated representative) of the club.
- d. Microlighting must be under the supervision of a holder of the National Private Pilots Licence (Microlight and Powered Parachute) or a UK PPL or JAR –FCL PPL with microlight class rating and following the guidance set out by the British Microlight Aircraft Association.

Rule 9.17 Gliding

- a. The flight must be under the supervision of a British Gliding Association Flying Instructor at a British Gliding Association registered club. Age, weight and maturity of the Scout Member under training must be considered by the Chief Flying Instructor (or their delegated representative) of the club.

NOTE: For motor / self-launching glider requirements please see [Rule 9.16c Powered Aircraft Flying](#).

Rule 9.18 Ballooning

- a. Where payment is involved the flight must be under the provision of an Air Operators Certificate (Balloon) holder.
- b. Where payment is not involved the pilot must hold a UK PPL (Balloon and Airship) and have at least 100 hours as pilot in charge of the type of balloon (hot air or gas) being used.

Rule 9.19 Parachuting

- a. Members may undertake parachute training supervised by a person holding an instructor rating of the British Parachute Association.
- b. Members may undertake parachuting or skydiving through a recognised British Parachuting Association centre.

Rule 9.20 Hang Gliding, Paragliding and Parascending

- a. Hang gliding, paragliding and parascending training may only be undertaken under the supervision of a person holding a British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association Senior Instructor Licence operating within a BHPA registered school.
- b. Hang gliders, paragliders and parascending equipment purchased or used by Members must comply with the British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association airworthiness requirements as set down in their Technical Manual.
- c. Hang gliding, paragliding and parascending must be undertaken only at British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association approved sites.
- d. Members may undertake dual/tandem flights on hang gliders, paragliders or wing ascending canopies (this specifically excludes round canopies) with a pilot holding the appropriate British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association dual licence.

Members are not permitted to undertake dual/tandem flights using round canopies.

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- e. When overseas, professional instructors/pilots must hold the relevant national qualification or equivalent.
- f. The flying of powered hang gliders and powered paragliders must fully comply with the appropriate rules above.

Rule 9.21 Hovercrafting

- a. Helmets must be worn by all those taking part in all organised Scout hovercrafting events, except in the case of 9.21b.
- b. A Sikh wearing a Turban may choose not to wear a helmet (ensuring there is no loose fabric which could be drawn into the fan). This does not apply to a Sikh wearing a Top Knot.
- c. Buoyancy aids must be worn at all times when on board a hovercraft.
- d. A remote cut off device must be fitted to any craft being used for solo training.
- e. Hovercrafting over water may only take place on inland waters of Class C, B1 or B2 waters (as defined in Rule 9.44b).

Rule 9.22 Creative Activities for Public Performance

- a. All forms of creative activities intended for public performance must have the approval of the relevant Commissioner, or their designate. Public performance is defined in the relevant toolkit ([Staged Performances](#) or [Musical Performances](#)).
- b. *This rule is intentionally left blank.*
- c. Scout and Guide joint activities must be approved by both the relevant Scout and Girlguiding Commissioners.
- d. All guidance and assessment criteria as laid down in the relevant toolkit must be met.
- e. All staged and musical performances wishing to perform publically must undertake an assessment when any of the following apply:
 - their key participants significantly change as determined by the relevant Commissioner, or their designate,
 - the agreed period has elapsed since their last assessment, or prior to their first public performance,
 - the relevant Commissioner or their designate has reason or concern to submit the performance for re-assessment.
- f. Musical performances assessment is granted for a maximum of three years.
- g. Staged performances assessment is granted for a maximum of five years.
- h. The relevant Commissioner, or their designate, can issue an exemption from the assessment to one-off performances. All other guidelines set out in the toolkits must still be followed.

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Rule 9.23 *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.24 *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.25 *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.26 Hill Walking and Off Road Cycling Permits

- a. All activities in Terrain 1 or Terrain 2 must be under the direct control of, or supervised by, a person holding the appropriate permit (see [Rule 9.7](#)).
- b. All activities in Terrain Zero must be approved by the relevant Commissioner (see Rule 9.1(b)).

Rule 9.27 Hill Walking and Off Road Cycling – Safety

For activities in Terrain One and Two as defined in Rules 9.29 & 9.30:

- a. A detailed route plan must always be left with a responsible person not taking part in the activity.
- b. Any route planning forms produced locally must contain at least the same information as sought in the Headquarters form.
- c. The route plan should be cancelled or collected when the activity is completed.
- d. Emergency cards must be carried by the party.
- e. Any emergency cards produced locally must contain the same information as sought in the Headquarters form.
- f. When Members take part in non-Scout events, the above rules may be varied at the discretion of their County Commissioner.

Rule 9.28 Terrain Zero Definition

Terrain Zero describes terrain which meets one of the following criteria:

- a. Meets all the following criteria:
 - is below 500 metres above sea level; and
 - is within 30 minutes travelling time from a road which can take an ordinary road-going ambulance or a building which is occupied (such as a farm) or another means of summoning help (such as a telephone box); and
 - contains no element of mountainous steep ground (routes or areas where the average person would need to regularly use their hands at least for balance if not for actual progress. This does not stop people from using their hands as an aid to confidence.)

or:

- b. Is a road, or path adjacent to a road, on which you would expect to see traffic.

Further information about delivering activities in Terrain Zero can be found in [FS120426 Terrain Zero Activities](#).

Rule 9.29 Terrain One Definition

Terrain One describes terrain which meets all of the following criteria:

- a. Meets any of the following criteria:

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- is below 800 metres but more than 500 metres above sea level or;
- is more than 30 minutes but less than three hours travelling time from a road which can take an ordinary road-going ambulance or a building which is occupied (such as a farm) or another means of calling help (such as a telephone box).

and

- contains no element of mountainous steep ground (routes or areas where the average person would need to regularly use their hands at least for balance if not for actual progress. This does not stop people from using their hands as an aid to confidence.)

and

- b. Is not a road, or path adjacent to a road, on which you would expect to see traffic.

and

- c. Is not Terrain Two as defined by Rule 9.30.

Rule 9.30 Terrain Two Definition

Terrain Two describes terrain which meets all of the following criteria:

- a. Meets any of the following criteria:

- is over 800 metres above sea level or;
- lies more than three hours travelling time from a road which can take an ordinary road-going ambulance or a building which is occupied (such as a farm) or another means of calling help (such as a telephone box), or;
- contains an element of mountainous steep ground (routes or areas where the average person would need to regularly use their hands at least for balance if not for actual progress. This excludes climbing activities but may include areas where ropes are used for confidence and security.)

and

- b. Is not a road, or path adjacent to a road, on which you would expect to see traffic.

Rule 9.31 Specialist Terrain

When in terrain or using skills that have not been assessed for a terrain 2 hillwalking or a climbing permit (such as glaciers, scrambling, via ferrata), then specific approval is required for the activity from the responsible Commissioner based on advice from someone with knowledge and experience of the activity. Specific approval is in addition to the holding of a terrain 2 hillwalking or climbing permit.

Rule 9.32 Party Size

For activities in Terrain One and Two as defined in Rules 9.29 & 9.30:

- Parties must consist of no more than eight, but no less than four people, except as provided for in Rule 9.32 (d) below.
- Each party must have a leader holding a permit or a designated party leader.
- If more than one group is formed the parties must use different routes or, if using the same route, leave a clear time and distance interval between them – so that they do not become mixed.

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- d. When walking directly to, and off the hills after, a multi pitch climb the party size may be less than four.
- e. No leader with a permit to supervise the activity may do so with more than three parties, including their own.
- f. When leaders holding permits are checking on the safety of Scout parties or their routes, the party size may be less than four. All the members of such a reduced party must each have the skills and experience required to travel safely in the hills in such circumstances, must follow rules regarding route plans and should plan to spend the minimum of time on their own..

Rule 9.33 Snowsports

- a. Snowsports environment definitions;
 - **Off Piste** – Outside of marked and patrolled snowsports areas;
 - **On Piste** – Within the marked and patrolled snowsports areas, including snowparks, except for those defined as nursery slopes;
 - **Nursery slopes** – on piste runs designated for beginners by the body responsible for the snowsports area;
 - **Artificial slopes** – either an indoor slope or an outdoor dry ski slope; except snowparks.
- b. Short term personal permit exemptions can be granted by appropriately qualified people, as described in the snowsports factsheet [FS120457](#)
- c. For off piste snowsports, the relevant Terrain 1 or Terrain 2 Hillwalking Winter permit is also required.
- d. Helmets must be worn by all those taking part in snowsports activities, except in the case of cross country skiing, ski touring when in walk mode or 9.33e.
- e. A Sikh wearing a Turban may choose to take part in snowsports activities without a helmet. This does not apply to a Sikh wearing a top knot.

NOTE: More information regarding these rules can be found at in [FS120424 Winter Sports](#)

Rule 9.34 Climbing and Abseiling

- a. Climbing helmets must always be worn by all those climbing or abseiling on natural features, except in the case of 9.34c.
- b. Climbing helmets need not be worn by those climbing or abseiling on artificial walls provided the activity leader is satisfied that the climber or abseiler has sufficient skill not to react unpredictably. Novices must always wear helmets, except in the case of 9.34c. The use of helmets for climbing using auto belay systems must be determined by the activity risk assessment.
- c. A Sikh wearing a Turban may choose to climb or abseil on natural features and artificial climbing walls without a helmet. This does not apply to a Sikh wearing a Top Knot.
- d. All climbing equipment should be used following the manufacturer's guidelines. Where it is not possible to follow manufacturer's guidelines a backup / redundancy must be built into this element of the setup.

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- e. The storing, maintenance and replacement of all climbing equipment should follow the manufacturer's guidelines.
- f. Automatic belay systems (systems that lower a climber down to the ground when they let go of the climbing wall without any human intervention) can be led by either:
 - A climbing permit holder (within the remit of their permit); or,
 - Following a written operating manual which must be agreed by a County Climbing Assessor.

Further information about the automatic belay systems and mobile climbing walls can be found in [FS120427 Climbing – auto belays and mobile walls](#).

- g. Abseiling and climbing activities can be run for non-members, when carried out following these rules, as long as the necessary extension of insurance cover is obtained.

With effect from 1 January 2016, The Scout Association's Public Liability Policy has been extended to automatically cover Scout Groups allowing non-members to take part in their abseiling and climbing activities. There is no longer the need to buy the additional cover (this refers to those who are running or owning climbing activities at a Group level only). Cover is still required to be purchased for Scout campsites and activity centres, District and County owned climbing and abseiling walls. This includes mobile climbing walls used at any Scout premises and/or public events. If you are uncertain of the requirements for additional insurance for climbing and abseiling activities please contact Unity (Scout Insurance Services) for more information.

- h. Other than (g) above, the only persons who may undertake abseiling and climbing activities using Scout equipment and/or under Scout supervision are Members of the Scout and Guide Movements.

Rule 9.35 Caving and Mine Exploration

- a. These rules apply to:
 - all caving systems (excluding show caves);
 - all mine exploration (excluding working show mines);
- b. The leader holding the permit must ensure that before the party sets out it must:
 - have received adequate instruction in equipment and safety procedures;
 - be carrying the appropriate equipment.
- c. The leader holding the permit must have:
 - taken advice on local knowledge, weather conditions and party size;
 - considered the use of local or professional guides.
- d. No underground activity may be undertaken by a party of fewer than four.
- e. A detailed plan must always be left on the surface with a responsible person in the host area.
- f. Any forms produced locally must contain at least the same information as sought in the Headquarters form.
- g. The plan should be cancelled or collected when the activity is completed.

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- h. All mines used for mine exploration must have a current inspection report covering the sections used that must be accessible to, and have been read by the permit holder.

Rule 9.36 Archery

- a. Archery must be run as specified in rule 9.7 or the [externally led archery page of scouts.org.uk](https://www.scouts.org.uk/externally-led-archery)
- b. Shooting at targets representing human beings or animals is not permitted as a part of any Scout activity, nor on property owned or leased by, or used in the name of, the Scout Movement (including Archery Tag and other combat style archery activities as per [POR 9.67](#)).
- c. The use of crossbows as a Scouting activity can be found in [rule 9.37 Shooting](#).

Rule 9.37 Shooting

Definition

- a. This rule applies to shooting activities using firearms as defined in law (including air guns with energy greater than 1 Joule), and also to the use of crossbows with a draw weight of 1.4kg or greater, re-enactment guns. This rule does not apply to paintballing, the use of laser guns and the use of toy guns.

Targets

- b. Shooting at targets representing human beings or animals is not permitted as a part of any Scout activity, nor on property owned or leased by, or used in the name of, the Scout Movement.

Parental consent

- c. Before engaging in shooting as an activity Leaders should take account of local feelings on shooting.
- d. The parent/guardian should be supplied with detailed information on the nature of the activity when permission is sought. An example form is available on the [shooting pages of the website](#). Where other forms are used they should at least include this information.
- e. When taking part in shooting activities members must have parental permission for all under 18's taking part.

Transportation, storage and use

- f. No firearms, may be bought, owned or used by any Scout unit or campsite unless the relevant line manager has made arrangements to ensure that possession and use complies with all statutory requirements and any applicable bylaws.
- g. Firearms may be taken on to Scout premises so long as permission is obtained from the owner or their representative and the person responsible for the activity (i.e. site warden/ manager or District Commissioner).
- h. Members operating firearms as defined in the law must do so in line with the Firearms act 1968 (as amended) and other relevant legislation.
- i. Members operating air guns and firearms in Northern Ireland must adhere to the Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004.

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- j. Members operating in Scotland must hold a 'target shooting club's approval' issued by Police Scotland. The storage and operation of air guns must be in accordance with the Air Weapon and Licencing Scotland Act 2015.
- k. Members running events involving air gun activities in Scotland must hold an Event Permit issued by Police Scotland and operate air guns in accordance with the Air Weapon and Licencing (Scotland) Act 2015.
- l. Members travelling to Scotland from elsewhere in the UK, and transporting their airguns in order to provide shooting activities require a Visitor Permit issued by Police Scotland. This must be acquired prior to the visit for either an individual or a group. Members must ensure that all shooting activities are carried out in line with the Air Weapon and Licencing (Scotland) Act 2015.
- m. Wherever practical, shooting ranges should be out of bounds, except during the specified times for shooting, where the range and surrounding areas must be managed appropriately.

Supervision

- n. In every case, shooting must be supervised by a competent and appropriately qualified Range Conducting Officer who must have a knowledge of the correct use of the firearms being used and shall be responsible for ensuring compliance by all persons in the range with the relevant range safety and other rules.
- o. Members may use firearms for historical re-enactment purposes as a member or guest of a club affiliated to the National Association of Re-enactment Societies and operating in accordance with their standards and codes of practice. Members using firearms under this rule remain subject to Rule 9.37c (which forbids shooting at targets representing human beings or animals).
- p. The person in charge of crossbow activities where the crossbow has a draw weight in excess of 1.4kg must hold a minimum of YPS Tutor Sport Crossbow qualification from the National Small-Bore Rifle Association (NSRA). Where members taking part in the activity are under the age of 18, the Range Officer or another person supervising participants in the activity must be aged not less than 21.
- q. Members may practise shooting with firearms, whether requiring a Firearms Certificate or not, under any of the following circumstances:
 - as a member or guest of a club approved for this purpose by the relevant Government Department;
 - on Service premises under the supervision of an authorised member of the armed forces;
 - if the firearms are shotguns, clay pigeon shooting under the standards and controls of the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association (CPSA);

Air guns

- r. Members may practise shooting with air guns which do not require a Firearms Certificate [except that in Northern Ireland a Firearms Certificate is always required] as follows:
 - the ranges must have been properly constructed to comply with guidelines issued by the NSRA or the National Rifle Association (NRA) and with any bye laws relevant to the location of the range;
 - the guns used must not be of an automatic nature;
 - the pellets used must be 'diabolo shaped' and of soft deformable metal such as lead;

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- the Range Conducting Officer must hold one of the qualifications listed in the current issue of the factsheet [FS120004 Shooting](#) and, if any of those shooting is under the age of 14, the Range Conducting Officer or another person supervising participants in the activity must be aged not less than 21;
- for a temporary range, the Range Officer shall prescribe appropriate range safety and other rules, taking account of the particular circumstances of the range;
- where the air guns being used are of greater than .177inch (4.5mm) calibre, shooting must take place outdoors on a range with a minimum distance to target of 12m.

Further guidance is available to support all of the above on the [shooting pages of scouts.org.uk](#).

Rule 9.38 Tomahawk Throwing

- a. The throwing of tomahawks and small hawks must follow the guidance in the [Tomahawk Throwing factsheet](#) (FS120011).
- b. Throwing at targets representing human beings or animals is not permitted as a part of any Scout activity, nor on property owned or leased by, or used in the name of, the Scout Movement.
- c. Throwing knives is not permitted within The Scout Association (see rule 9.67 [Banned Activities](#)).

Rule 9.39 Paintball Games

- a. When taking part in paintballing members must:
 - use external operators who are members of the UK Paintball Association (UKPBA), the UK Paintball Sports Federation (UKPSF) or an equivalent body;
 - have parental permission for all under 18s taking part.

Rule 9.40 Laser Games

- a. Parental permission is required for laser games.
- b. Parental permission is required for laser clay pigeon shooting.

Rule 9.41 Aerial Runways

- a. Aerial runways may only be constructed under the personal supervision of an experienced and responsible adult, who must also supervise its use and operation.
- b. Aerial runways must be constructed and maintained in accordance with the factsheet [FS120006 Aerial Runway Code](#).
- c. The responsible adult must ensure that:
 - all equipment is checked before use;
 - the entire structure is checked regularly during the activity for safety.
- d. The only persons who may use an aerial runway constructed by Members of the Scout Movement are Members of the Scout and Guide Movements.

Rule 9.42: Water Activities – General

- a. Members taking part in any water activity (those which take place on or in the water) must be able to demonstrate to a suitable person their ability to swim 50 metres in clothing and equipment appropriate to the activity (where a buoyancy aid or life jacket is worn for the activity)

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this may be used for the demonstration) and keep afloat for five minutes. Anyone unable to meet these requirements is classified as a non-swimmer and must follow Rule 9.42(b).

- b. A non-swimmer may take part in water activities, at the discretion of the person in charge, only if certain precautions are taken;
 - any non-swimmer must wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid of approved design and be in the charge of an adult (this does not apply for swimming, paddling or activities near water).
 - there must be no more than one non-swimmer in any craft, unless a one-to-one ratio is maintained (one competent adult to one non-swimmer).
 - in the case of single-handed craft this should only be on C or B1 Waters (see Rule 9.44 (b)) with supervision on a one-to-one basis (one competent adult to one non-swimmer).
 - Where non-swimmers are taking part in swimming activities (as defined in Rule 9.50) they must be under the direct supervision of an adult in the water. This must not exceed two non-swimmers to one adult.
- c. The above conditions do not apply when below decks, protected in larger vessels or when using recognised forms of public transport.

Rule 9.43 Life Jackets and Buoyancy Aids

- a. All members taking part in water activities (excluding scuba diving, snorkelling, surfing, swimming and paddling (as defined in rule 9.49)) must wear an EC approved buoyancy aid or lifejacket appropriate to the activity, weather conditions, size of the participant. This does not apply when below decks. Further guidance can be found in [FS120603 Water Safety \(incorporating Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids\)](#).
- b. The person in charge of any water activity must ensure that the lifejackets and buoyancy aids being used are fit for purpose and suitable for the activity on each occasion that it is used.

Rule 9.44 Classification of Waters

- a. All waters used for Scouting activities must be classified as C, B1, B2, B3 or A in accordance Rule 9.44b.
- b. Water class definitions;
 - **Class C** - safe inland waters which are less than 100m wide where flow causes little effect (including swimming pools);
 - **Class B1** - sheltered inland waters and other sheltered water where currents and tides create no real danger;
 - **Class B2** - the sea up to one mile from the shore, but excluding more dangerous waters close inshore; more sheltered parts of estuaries; large inland lakes and lochs; inland waters British Canoe Union Grade 2;
 - **Class B3** - the sea up to three miles from the shore, but excluding more dangerous waters close inshore; busy commercial ports, exposed parts of estuaries; inland waters British Canoe Union Grade 3;
 - **Class A** - open sea more than three miles from the shore, and other dangerous waters close inshore; inland waters British Canoe Union Grade 4 and above.

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c. *This rule is intentionally left blank*

The National Directory of Waters is available online at scouts.org.uk/waterways

Rule 9.45 Activities on Class C Waters

All water activities on Class C waters (excluding swimming – see Rules 9.48-9.52, SCUBA and motorised activities) must be approved by the relevant Commissioner and the standards contained in the factsheet [FS120623 Class C Waters](#) followed.

Rule 9.46 Boats

- a. All boats owned by or on long term loan to the Movement must have a unique identifier clearly marked on the craft.
- b. When members take part in Scouting activities on waters controlled by the Canal and River Trust the members or group must be identifiable as part of The Scout Association to gain access to the waters within the TSA bulk license agreement.
- c. All boats should have adequate marine insurance cover.

Note: Craft which are foot or hand propelled, sailing craft or other craft not exceeding 5m in length are covered by TSA main policy. Any other craft will require additional marine cover.

- d. *This rule is intentionally left blank*
- e. The person in charge of any water activity must ensure that the craft and associated equipment are fit for purpose and suitable for the activity on each occasion that it is used.

Rule 9.47 Charter Vessels

- a. When vessels are hired or chartered the activity rules of the Association apply.
- b. Before entering into a hire agreement which includes an indemnity clause (i.e. where it is assumed that the hirer will be responsible for damage, injury or loss) the agreement must be referred to Headquarters (see [Rule 9.9\(e\)](#)).
- c. Where the vessel is chartered to be under the command of professional staff, the rules relating to permits do not apply.
- d. When taking Members as passengers on hired sailing or powered craft, the leader responsible must:
 - have reasonable grounds to believe the person in charge of the craft, who must be either the owner or authorised by the owner, has the necessary knowledge, skill and experience;
 - ensure that the party understands the discipline necessary for safety including any local regulations or bye laws which may apply.

Rule 9.48 Activities near the water

When activities take place near the water the guidance contained within the CCPR Group Safety at Water Margins document should be followed. This can be found at www.scouts.org.uk/watersafety

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Rule 9.49 Paddling

When in water that is, for the individual taking part, below waist height (or knee height in moving water) when standing, leaders must:

- Conduct a risk assessment of the activity.
- Provide appropriate individual(s) as safety cover and equipment as identified by the risk assessment,
- Ensure any safety cover is in an appropriate position to provide effective cover.
- Ensure the participants are clearly visible above the water level at all times.

Rule 9.50 Swimming - General

When in water that is, for the individual taking part, above waist height (or knee height in moving water) when standing, leaders must follow the rules on swimming (Rule 9.51 and 9.52) except where:

- taking part in scuba diving or snorkelling
- it is a river crossing during hillwalking under the leadership of someone holding a hillwalking permit
- it is underground during caving or mine exploration under the leadership of someone holding a caving or mine exploration permit

Rule 9.51 Swimming Activities – Class C waters (including swimming pools)

- a. When members of The Movement take part in a swimming activity in Class C waters there must be one responsible person in overall control.
- b. This person must meet the requirements of any written operating procedure and carry out a risk assessment for the location and activity.
- c. Where there are no operating procedures, the leader must ensure that:
 - Sufficient people are present to provide safety cover to those in the water as identified in the risk assessment.
 - The safety cover meet the requirements for providing safety cover for swimming activities (within [FS120620 – Swimming](#)).

Rule 9.52 Swimming Activities – All other open waters

- a. When members of The Movement take part in a swimming activity in open waters of Class B1 or higher, there must be one responsible person in overall control.
- b. This person must meet the requirements of any written operating procedure and carry out a risk assessment for the location and activity.
- c. Where an attendant lifeguard is provided they must follow the direction of the lifeguard on duty.
- d. Where an attendant lifeguard is not provided, leaders must ensure appropriate safety cover is present. The safety cover must either:
 - Hold the relevant elements of the RLSS Water Safety Management Programme (WSMP) [see FS120620](#) as outlined below, (or an equivalent or higher qualification), and work within the remit of their award:

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- Sea (beaches etc): WSMP level 1, level 2 (beach) and level 3.
- Flat inland water (lakes, lochs etc): WSMP level 1, level 2 (flat water) and level 3.
- Moving inland water (rivers etc): WSMP level 1, level 2 (river) and level 3.

or:

- Hold a water activity permit (leadership or supervisory); operate within the remit of their permit (i.e. class of waters, group size etc) and meet the requirements for providing safety cover for swimming activities (within [FS120620 – Swimming](#)).

Rule 9.53 *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.54 Scout Owned Swimming Facilities

- a. Management Committees of Scout property with a swimming pool must operate the facility in accordance with the HSE guidance contained within [HSG 179 - Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools](#).

Rule 9.55 Nights Away Permit Scheme

- a. All camping and residential experiences within the United Kingdom are subject to Rules 9.55 – 9.63.
- b. This includes all events where it is intended that young people will sleep overnight and arrangements are put in place for this purpose, such as sleepovers, camps, Pack Holidays and expeditions.
- c. Nights away abroad are subject to [Rule 9.64](#).

Rule 9.56 Nights Away Responsibilities

- a. A Leader or other adult leading a camp or residential experience involving young people under 18 years old must:
 - hold a valid *Nights Away Permit*;
 - have the prior agreement of the young person's Section Leader;
 - have parental consent (method to be determined by the leader) in which parents are informed of key information about the event including which leaders are present;
 - as a minimum, attend the event during the time that provision is made for young people to be sleeping overnight. They remain responsible for the event at all times;
 - ensure the relevant notification is made, as per [Rule 9.57](#).
- b. The District Commissioner is responsible for:
 - the issue of Nights Away Permits in accordance with the application, assessment and approval process and content of the appropriate factsheet; The Commissioner can only approve the issue of a Permit following the recommendation of a Nights Away Adviser and cannot increase the level of the permit beyond that recommended without a further assessment by an NAA.
 - suspension or withdrawal of Nights Away Permits as per [Rule 9.58](#);

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- the standards of all camping and residential experiences taking place in the District and may cancel an event, if judged necessary;
- appointing one, or more, Nights Away Advisers in accordance with the process and content of the appropriate factsheet.

County Commissioners have these responsibilities for events and permits issued by the County.

- c. For large scale events there needs to be a permit holder responsible for each residential group. There is no limit to the number of groups that a permit holder can be responsible for, but they remain responsible for the standard of the event for each group. In addition the permit holder must ensure the home Commissioner is notified ([Rule 9.57m](#)) and inform them of the total number of groups they are responsible for during the event.
- d. All groups undertaking a nights away event must have immediate access to someone who has a current First Aid qualification, minimum First Response. The level of First Aid competence required for each event will be determined by the event risk assessment. However a full first aid certificate as defined in [FS120052](#) is required for those operating in remote environments, where travelling time is 3 hours or more (in the method of travel being used) to a point of refuge, including;
 - a road which carries a normal road-going ambulance;
 - a building which is occupied (such as a farm or harbour);
 - or another means of calling help (such as a telephone box).

The permit holder is not required to hold a first aid qualification.

- e. The requirement to have completed a First Response course is waived for holders of a valid First Aid qualification, where the syllabus equals or exceeds that of a First Response course, including hypothermia and hyperthermia training.

NOTE: Rule 9.56d is now for implementation by Counties by 31 December 2020. During this time, where the revised processes have not yet been implemented locally, reference should be made to Rule 9.56d October 2018 version of POR.

9.57 Nights Away Permits

- a. There are four categories of permit:
 - indoor – for staying in a building that has built in lighting and cooking facilities, toilets plumbed into a waste disposal system (i.e. a cess pit, storage tank or mains drains) and running drinking water;
 - campsite – for staying at a site that has toilets plumbed into a waste disposal system (eg. a cess pit, storage tank or mains drains) and access to running drinking water;
 - Green Field – for staying at any site where any of the above facilities do not exist – for example, a summer camp on a farmer's field;
 - Lightweight Expedition – for staying at any site for not more than one night before moving on. The core activity is a form of expedition, not residential, and all the equipment is transported with the participants. eg. QSA/DofE hikes, expedition hikes, canoe expeditions:

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- b. Those holding a *Green Field Permit* may lead residential events in the other three categories.
- c. Those holding a *Camp Site Permit* may also run indoor residential events.
- d. Those holding a *Hillwalking Permit* that includes lightweight camping in remote areas may also run *Lightweight Expedition* events.
- e. *Nights Away Permits* are not Section specific and Districts and Counties must not operate a policy of issuing only Section specific permits.
- f. A permit holder may operate with Members from another District or County (subject to the normal approval of the District/County Commissioner of the Members concerned).
- g. Permit holders proposing to work outside their usual Section should obtain guidance from the *Nights Away Adviser* before the event takes place.
- h. Permits can only be held by Members or Associate Members of The Scout Association.
- i. There is no maximum age limit to gaining a *nights Away Permit*.
- j. Permits must be renewed at intervals of not more than five years.
- k. Permits will expire automatically if they are not renewed.
- l. Assessment:
 - i. An applicant will be assessed by a *Nights Away Adviser* appointed by the District or County Commissioner, who will recommend a level of permit to be granted;
 - ii. Assessments will be carried out in accordance with the process and content of the appropriate factsheet.
- m. Notification
 - i. The relevant home Commissioner (or their nominee) must be notified before any *nights away* event takes place. It is best practice for at least seven days' notice to be given;
 - ii. The notification must include all the information required in the [Nights Away Notification Form \(NAN\)](#)
 - iii. It is the responsibility of the Permit holder to ensure that appropriate notification is made for each group they are responsible for.
 - iv. Adult groups are required to notify their relevant Commissioner of *nights away* events.

Rule 9.58 Renewal, Restriction, Suspension or Withdrawal of Nights Away Permits

- a. Any Leader who is alleged to have broken these activity rules must have their permit(s) suspended immediately.
- b. The relevant Commissioner will promptly enquire into the allegation and determine whether the permit(s) are to be reinstated, modified or cancelled.

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- c. The relevant Commissioner may at any time impose restrictions, suspend, withdraw or not renew a permit provided they have reasonable grounds to do so. Any amendment of a permit's status is only valid if the record on Compass is updated as appropriate.
- d. A Permit automatically expires if a member leaves the Scout Association.

Rule 9.59 *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.60 *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.61 Nights Away Passports

- a. A Scout or Explorer Scout who wishes to lead a camping or residential event can do so when issued with an Event Passport, this is only valid for use with members of their own section.
- b. Each Event Passport is issued for one event only by a permit holder experienced in the category of camp or residential experience proposed.
- c. Event Passports cannot be given to anyone aged over 18 and cannot be used for joint explorer Scout/Scout Network events.
- d. The permit holder has responsibility for notification (see [Rule 9.57I](#)).
- e. The permit holder must provide support during both the preparation and the event itself and be satisfied that the young person has the required abilities, but is not required to attend the event.

Event Passports and guidance are available from the Scout Information Centre or can be downloaded from the [print centre](#).

- f. Those responsible for running Scout campsites or activity centres who hold a permit may issue site specific Event Passports for an extended period (up to a maximum of 12 months) covering multiple service events for those under 18 years working on projects on their site.
- g. The home Commissioner must be informed of those under 18 years working on service team projects at Scout campsites and activity centres, but a separate NAN form for each occasion need not be completed if a range of dates is specified.
- h. When leading a Scout Network residential event a passport or permit is not required, but notification (Rule 9.57I) is, and the event Leader must have first hand experience of camping or residential events and be familiar with the Association's appropriate resource material.
- i. As part of the planning process parents must be informed of no leaders being present and of the supervision arrangements for a residential event using an event Passport and be satisfied with them prior to consenting to their child taking part.

For adult / Scout ratios on Nights Away activities, see [Rule 3.9](#)

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Rule 9.62 Family Nights Away

- a. The permit holder is responsible for the overall camp and must ensure that all Scout Association rules are followed regardless of the presence of parents, carers or other adults.
- b. *This rule is intentionally left blank.*
- c. *This rule is intentionally left blank.*

Further information about Family Nights Away can be found in [FS120083 Family Nights Away](#). Other guidance is given in the publication Nights Away.

Rule 9.63 Expeditions and Events in Adventurous Country or Onboard Craft

- a. All expeditions within the United Kingdom are covered by this Rule. Prior notification to relevant Commissioners of expeditions involving nights away must be given as described in [Rule 9.57I](#).
- b. Some events will require the leader to hold an appropriate Adventurous Activity Permit. (Terrain One and above or on board watercraft). There is no additional requirement to gain a Nights Away Permit if the Activity Permit included an assessment of the skills needed to supervise camping or other residential experiences.

Rule 9.64 Visits Abroad

A Visit Abroad is defined as: 'Any visit outside the United Kingdom, the Channel islands and the Isle of Man on a recognised and approved Scouting activity or travelling in the name of Scouting. This applies to youth and adult Members, Associate Members and non-Members'.

'Youth and adult members, Associate Members and non-Members located within the British Scouting Overseas area and Northern Ireland are expected to follow the Visits Abroad Process when leaving the country where their group is registered. However, exceptionally, specific alternative arrangements may be approved and documented by a relevant Commissioner'.

NOTE: For NI Scouts travelling to the Republic of Ireland it is no longer a requirement to take out additional travel insurance, providing the trip is for no longer than 48 hours. If you feel that you require cover for emergency medical expenses, personal possession or cancellation then it is strongly advised that you should buy travel insurance. All members should carry a valid EHIC card for travelling within many European Countries including the Republic of Ireland. EHIC cards are obtainable from the NHS website.

- a. A camp or residential experience abroad which includes Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts, or Explorer Scouts, must be led by an adult holding a relevant Nights Away Permit. For Scout Network visits abroad see Rule 9.61e.
- b. All visits abroad must follow the VA Process and be approved at planning stage by the relevant Commissioner to the designation of the trip:
 - England and Northern Ireland: District or County Commissioner and Assistant County Commissioner for International.
 - Scotland: District or Regional Commissioner and Regional International Adviser.
 - Wales: District or Area Commissioner and Assistant Area Commissioner for International.

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- BSO: District Commissioner and Assistant Area Commissioner for International.
- Countries/UK/HQ: UK International Commissioner, Scottish HQ Commissioner (International), Deputy Commissioner Wales – Programme (International).

The trip must then gain final approval and sign off by the relevant Commissioner before the visit leaves the UK. A VA Form must be submitted to the Assistant County Commissioner (International) or International Adviser who supports such events on behalf of United Kingdom headquarters. As part of this process, the Assistant County Commissioner for International (or equivalent) must complete the online VA notification form, notifying UK Headquarters of the trip.

The VA Form and guidance on the process can be found on www.scouts.org.uk/international or through notifying your Assistant County Commissioner (International) or County International Adviser (or equivalent) of your planned visit.

- c. The UK Leader in Charge of a visit abroad must ensure that adequate travel insurance has been arranged for all members of the party, and that suitable InTouch arrangements are in place ([Rule 9.3](#))
- d. The UK Leader in Charge of any adventurous activities abroad must apply the appropriate rules and hold the appropriate adventurous activity permits, classifying the hills/mountains or waters as defined in Rules [9.28](#), [9.29](#), [9.30](#) and [9.44](#), although the altitude criteria for hills/mountains may not apply in some areas. In case of doubt, the Assistant County Commissioner (Activities) or Adviser should be consulted.
- e. When overseas, UK members may take part in activities being run by members of the host Scout organisation following the host organisation's guidance and rules. In this context, Kandersteg International Scout Centre is deemed an independent Scout organisation. There must be a Leader from the UK present who is able to halt the activity if they have safety concerns at any point. Activities forbidden by UK Scouting remain forbidden even when overseas. If using external providers overseas please see POR [Rule 9.9b](#) for further guidance.
- f. UK Members including Members of the British Scouting Overseas under the age of 18 may only take part in group based hosted hospitality experiences (i.e. using group accommodation not private homes), they must not participate in home based hospitality experiences.
- g. *This rule is intentionally left blank.*
- h. *This rule is intentionally left blank.*

Rule 9.65 Visits to the United Kingdom

- a. Invitations to Scouts and Scouters or Guides and Guiders from abroad to visit or camp in the United Kingdom should not be confirmed until approval has been obtained from the District Commissioner. The Assistant County Commissioner (International) or the County International Adviser, if there is such a County appointment, should also be informed.
- b. Where, in the activity rules in this chapter, reference is made to 'Members of the Scout and Guide Movements' this is taken to mean Members of an Association or Federation recognised by either the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) or the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS).
- c. The Association's Personal Accident and Medical Expenses Insurance Policy does not cover adequately foreign Scouts and Guides visiting the United Kingdom (see Chapter 8).

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- d. Unity (Scout Insurance Services) should be informed of visiting parties or individuals and will advise whether additional cover is required.
- e. It is advised that group based hospitality (i.e. accommodating Scouts and/or Guides from abroad in group accommodation not private homes) is the means of providing hospitality experiences. Under 18's may only participate in home based hospitality within the UK (i.e. in private homes) if the following conditions are met:
 - i. they are Scouts and/or Guides from abroad (i.e. this specifically excludes UK Members including Members of British Scouting Overseas;
 - ii. a Hosting Agreement must be in place and signed by all parties (i.e. UK Leader in Charge, leader of the Scouts and/or Guides from abroad, parents of Scouts and/or Guides from abroad and all adults who will be present overnight in the private home at the time of providing the experience);
 - iii. all adults who will be present overnight in the private home at the time of providing the experience must have a valid Disclosure and sign a Hosting Agreement;
 - iv. the UK Leader in Charge must confirm the suitability of a home based hospitality experience being offered in the UK to Scouts and/or Guides from abroad, this must be done by undertaking a home visit to the host family's home prior to the home hospitality experience taking place (the home visit can be delegated to another UK leader);
 - v. where the home hospitality experience is for two or more nights a visit from the UK Leader in Charge (or their nominee) and the leader of the Scouts and/or Guides from abroad (or their nominee) is required during the stay and every two nights thereafter for the duration of the stay;
 - vi. Scouts and/or Guides from abroad must be accommodated in at least a pair in each private home;
 - vii. the UK Leader in Charge must consider appropriate control measures and contingency plans; and
 - viii. the host District Commissioner (or their nominee) must approve the home based hospitality experience.

Further information and support can be found in Home and Hosted Hospitality Guidance.

Rule 9.66 *This rule is intentionally left blank.*

Rule 9.67 Banned Activities

The following activities are not permitted within The Scout Association:

- Towing of inflatables behind powered watercraft (eg banana boating)
- Bungee jumping
- Hitch hiking
- Knife throwing
- Archery Tag and other combat style archery activities

Rule 9.68 *This rule is intentionally left blank.*

Rule 9.69 Martial Arts

- a. All martial arts must be carried out using the standards and controls laid down by the appropriate Sports Council recognised National Governing Body.

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Rule 9.70 Horse Riding and Pony Trekking

- a. Activities involving horse riding or pony trekking must be carried out using a British equestrian Federation member body approved centre or club.
- b. Horse riding helmets must be worn by all riders in all Scout riding activities, except in the case of 9.70c.
- c. A Sikh wearing a Turban may choose not to wear a horse riding helmet. This does not apply to a Sikh wearing a Top Knot.

Rule 9.71 Cycling

- a. Cycle safety helmets must be worn by all cyclists in all organised Scout cycling events, except in the case of 9.71b.
- b. A Sikh wearing a Turban may choose not to wear a cycle helmet. This does not apply to a Sikh wearing a Top Knot.

Rule 9.72 Motor Sports

- Motorised activities away from public roads may be undertaken when:
Participants must wear appropriate safety equipment for the activity being undertaken, this includes helmets for all off road and racing activities.
- Safety briefings must be given to all participants and marshals.
- The activity must take place in an area with clear separation and boundary between participants and spectators/ the public.
- The maximum speed must be considered based on the age and ability of the participant, the vehicle, the supervision, the terrain and any additional factors including legal restrictions on age e.g. quad biking.

Rule 9.73 *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.74 *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.75 *This rule is intentionally left blank*

Rule 9.76 Joint Activities or Joint Use of facilities with other Youth Organisations

A joint activity is one where youth members of both organisations are present.

- a. Joint activities involving members of the Scout Movement with members of Girlguiding must be undertaken following the guidance in [FS120007 Joint Activities with Girlguiding](#). Satisfaction in relation to Girlguiding policies and procedures will be monitored and maintained by Headquarters for the whole Association.
- b. Joint activities involving members of the Scout Movement with members of other organisations (except Girlguiding) must be approved by the County Commissioner and following the guidance in [FS120013 Joint Activities with other organisations](#). Satisfaction about policies and procedures of these other organisations is the responsibility of the County Commissioner or their representative.
- c. Those responsible for accepting bookings from other youth organisations for use of Scout camp sites, activity centres or other Scout owned facilities must satisfy themselves that:

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- the Child Protection and Safety Policies of the Association will be adhered to;
 - all adults in the party have been deemed suitable to work with young people by their own organisation;
 - they are aware of The Scout Association's internal rules and good practice.
- d. The above should be an integral part of any booking procedure.
- e. Scout Counties, Districts and Groups are able to make their own decisions on the use of their facilities. Much will depend on the situation locally.

Rule 9.77 Other Activities

- a. There are many opportunities for Members to take part in activities which are not specifically covered in the activity rules.

Before undertaking an activity of this nature the Leader concerned must:

- assess the risks involved;
- ensure all Members' physical and/or emotional wellbeing can meet the requirements of the activity;
- ensure that all equipment used fits the participants and is suitable for the activity;
- obtain the approval of the Home District/County Commissioner.

Rule 9.78 High Ropes Activities

- a. High ropes activities are:
- Any off ground activity, not covered by the adventurous activity permit scheme that should use a belay or similar safety system such as cow's tails or a trolley system. Examples of what activities are included within this can be found in [FS120423 High Ropes](#).
- b. Temporary high ropes structures are:
- A high ropes construction erected for a single event or no longer than a week, whichever is longer.
- c. Permanent high ropes structures are:
- A high ropes construction not classed as temporary.

Rule 9.79 Permanent High Ropes Activities

Permanent high ropes activities are defined in Rule 9.78 High Ropes Activities

- a. Construction and maintenance of permanent high ropes structures must follow the guidelines in AAIAC (Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee) – The UK Ropes Course Guide. This can be found at [here](#)
- b. Permanent high ropes structures must have a written operating manual which needs to be approved by a Technical Adviser. The minimum qualification of a Technical Adviser is Mountain Instructor Award (MIA) or a European Ropes Course Association (ERCA) qualified high ropes instructor qualified to rescue (or equivalent of higher).

Further details of what should be included within the operating manual and how to find a Technical Adviser can be found in [FS120423 High Ropes](#).

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Rule 9.80 Temporary High Ropes Activities

Temporary high ropes activities are defined in Rule 9.78 High Ropes Activities

- a. Construction of temporary high ropes activities must follow the guidelines contained in [FS120423 High Ropes](#).
- b. Temporary high ropes activities must be constructed and operated either:
 - By the holder of a climbing permit (that includes selecting anchors and setting up belay systems), or a caving or mine exploration permit holder (not including a permit for caving or mine exploration – no vertical pitches). The permit holder may only operate to the limits of their existing permit (group size, supervision levels etc).

Or

- Using a setup agreed by a County Climbing Assessor or a European Ropes Course Association (ERCA) instructor qualified to rescue (or equivalent or higher), **and** which is:
 - Constructed by a competent person, **and**
 - has a written operating manual,both of which must be agreed by a County Climbing Assessor or a European Ropes Course Association (ERCA) instructor qualified to rescue (or equivalent or higher).

Further details of what should be included within the operating manual and how to find and check an ERCA instructor can be found in [FS120423 High Ropes](#).

Rule 9.81 Fencing

All fencing activities must be carried out using the standards and controls laid down by British Fencing.