

# TRAINING MANAGER'S TRAINING ADVISER TOOLKIT



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**Note:** Although in some parts of the British Isles Scout Counties are known as Areas or Islands – and in one case Bailiwick - for ease of reading this publication simply refers to County/Counties. In Scotland there is no direct equivalent to County or Area. In Scotland, Scouting is organised into Districts and Regions, each with distinct responsibilities. Some 'County' functions are the responsibility of Scottish Regions, whilst others lie with Scottish Districts. The focus of responsibility is outlined in Scottish Variations from POR.

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Training Advisers (TAs) have a really important role to play in supporting adults from the start of their adult training journey to the award of their Wood Badge. However, those supporting our adult learners need support and guidance too.

### **Who is this toolkit for?**

The toolkit is for Training Managers who want to run events locally for their TAs to promote networking, share good practice, overcome challenges and keep up to date.

### **Why should I use the toolkit?**

Reasons to use this toolkit include...

- you are planning to run an event for your TAs and need some help with the content
- you know that you want to do something for your TAs, but are not sure what
- you want to give your TAs an opportunity to meet up and network with each other
- you want to get feedback from your TAs on certain things
- you want to update your TAs on recent changes to the Adult Training Scheme

### **What does the toolkit contain?**

The toolkit contains lots of ideas for sessions that you can run, either on their own or as part of a support day, for your TAs. The sessions focus on various objectives which are outlined before each session. The sessions can be adapted as required to meet local needs. Any resources or additional information that is required are outlined before each session.

The sessions outlined in this toolkit are not mandatory and do not replace the Module 25 – Assessing Learning training that TAs are required to complete. Ideally, Module 25 – Assessing Learning training should be completed by TAs before attending your TA event.

### **Planning considerations**

Before you start planning your TA support events, it is a good idea to think about:

- what do you want to get out of your events? What do you want your TAs to get out of the events?
- what feedback do you want to get from your TAs?
- who is going to organise and run the event? Are you going to need facilitators or extra course staff on the day?
- where are you going to hold the events?
- how many TAs do you have? How many are likely to come to the events? How many do you have capacity for at your venue? How are you going to let your TAs know about the events?
- are you going to do a whole day event, a half day or a couple of hours? How will they be structured?
- how often are you going to hold support events for TAs? Will this be a one off event or are you going to hold more?

We have included some tips in the table below from Training Managers who have run their own TA support events. These may be helpful when planning your own events:

Objectives	<p>It is important to take some time before planning your events to think about what you and your TAs want to get out of it. Is there anything specific that you feel your TAs would benefit from finding out more about? Are there any local issues that you feel need to be explored? Objectives have been included with each session to help you identify which will fit your needs best.</p>
Venue	<p>Do you have a local headquarters or other Scout building where the events could be held? Are there any other local community venues that you could hire? Will the events be held in the one room, or will you also require a series of breakout rooms for small group work?</p> <p>You will need to think about the accessibility requirements of those who will be attending your event and ensure that it is suitable. Also, you will need to think about the location of the venue with regards to the size and geography of your County and ensure that it is somewhere that attendees from around the County can get to fairly easily.</p> <p>Depending on the budget available, you may want to turn your event in to a bit of a 'thank you' for your TAs, for all the hard work that they do and the time that they put in.</p> <p>Depending on your location, you may want to consider running some of these sessions online as a webinar or Skype session, rather than getting all of your TAs together at the same time. The sessions are primarily designed to be run as face-to-face sessions but they can be run online if the need arises.</p>
Organisation	<p>You do not have to organise and run the whole event yourself. You may want to ask members of your District or County training team if they can help to run the event. Also, there may be other Training Managers in your local area who could help out.</p> <p>The amount of content you wish to cover at your events will dictate how long it is. A whole day event may be too much of a time commitment for some TAs; therefore it may be a better idea to schedule an afternoon, morning or evening session, or a series of them, instead.</p> <p>It's worth thinking about the structure of your events, whether you want to run the same programme for all participants or whether you want to offer different sessions. For example, you could run an introductory session and task for all participants, followed by break out workshops focussing on different area, closed by a question and answer session for everyone.</p>

	<p>It could be a good idea to get Group Scout Leaders and District/County Commissioners to attend where possible. Even if they are not currently TAs, by coming along to the event they will gain a better understanding of what TAs do, of the Adult Training Scheme, and of how they can support learners that they line manage.</p>
Speakers	<p>Do you have anyone locally who could come along to open or close the event and act as a keynote speaker? This can be a powerful way of getting key messages across and setting the tone for the event. Contact the Adult Support Team at UKHQ on <a href="mailto:adult.support@scouts.org.uk">adult.support@scouts.org.uk</a> to find out more about national training volunteers who can help with this.</p>
Networking opportunities	<p>Do ensure that you allow opportunities for networking and idea sharing at your events. This will provide your TAs with invaluable opportunities to meet and speak to others that they may not normally come in to contact with and to share good practice.</p> <p>Also, running an event can create a real 'feel good factor' amongst your TAs, particularly if you have not run anything specifically for them for a while.</p>
Further support	<p>At your initial event, it is a good idea to find out from the TAs in attendance whether they would like further support events, what they would like covered, and how often they would like these to take place. This will help you to plan future events and ensure that you are meeting the needs of your TAs.</p>

# Session 1

## TA Toolkit – the role of the TA

### Session objectives

- to identify the skills and qualities of an effective TA
- to help TAs better understand the responsibilities of their role

### Great for...

- getting your TAs together to discuss issues
- getting your TAs to think about the responsibilities of their role

### Resources

- marker pens
- flipchart paper or large pieces of card with cut outs of tool boxes stuck to them (images of tool boxes can be sourced easily online)

### Time

This will depend on the number of participants that you have in attendance, but will be between 30 minutes and 45 minutes.

### Method

Set up the training room by sticking your pieces of flip chart paper or card (with the tool boxes stuck on) to the wall, ensuring there will be enough of these for each small group to have their own. Divide the pieces of flipchart in to two. On one half, write 'responsibilities' and on the other half, write 'skills and qualities'.

Allocate each small group one of the tool box sheets. Explain to participants that they are going to fill up their TA toolkit with everything they need to do their role as a TA. Ask the TAs to record what they think the responsibilities of the TA role are and what skills and qualities they think are needed to be a TA on the corresponding section of their sheet.

Once complete, ask the groups to visit one of the toolkits prepared by another group and look at what they have written. Ask groups to add in anything they think is missing and ask them to mark with sticky dots what they think the top three skills that a TA needs are and what the top three most important responsibilities of the TA role are.

Ask each group to feed back a brief summary of what is written on their toolkit and their top three skills and responsibilities. Record these as a list on flip chart paper and display in the training room.

# Session 2

## Overcoming Barriers

### Session objectives

- to provide an opportunity for TAs to meet and discuss issues
- to help identify perceived barriers that are holding TAs or learners back and preventing them from being effective
- to come up with some suggestions for ways in which perceived barriers could be broken down

### Great for...

- getting your TAs together to discuss issues
- getting your TAs to discuss good practice
- identifying potential solutions
- planning for the future

### Resources

- marker pens
- paper table cloths or flip chart paper
- post-it notes
- table protectors (optional)

### Time

This will depend on the number of participants that you have in attendance, but will be between an hour and an hour and a half.

### Method

Set up the training room by putting paper table cloths on the tables, ensuring that there are enough tables and chairs available for small groups of TAs to sit around them. You may also need to put protectors underneath the table cloths to stop the marker pen damaging the tables. Flip chart paper can be used as an alternative to table cloths. If desired, ask participants to draw a grid on their sheets to represent a brick wall and to record their answers in each of the bricks.

In small groups, ask the TAs to record on the paper table cloths what their perceived barriers are. The barriers that you ask them to identify will vary depending on local needs. For example, participants could be asked to identify what they think the barriers are that stop their learners from making progress with their Wood Badge or what the barriers are to them doing their role as a TA effectively.

Once their table cloth is complete, ask the groups to move to another table and look at the barriers that the other group has recorded on their tablecloth. To avoid misunderstandings about what has been written, you may wish to ask the groups to leave one member behind to explain what they have written down and why to the next group to avoid confusion. Alternatively, you may wish to arrange specific facilitators, for example experienced members of the local training team, to sit on each table and stay behind to explain what has been written to the next group. This will ensure that none of the TAs misses out on the discussions that are taking place as the groups move around. If using facilitators, ensure that they are fully briefed beforehand on the task.



Once groups have moved tables and have read the previous groups' perceived barriers, ask them to discuss ways in which these barriers could be overcome. Whether it is something local, or something on a national level, ask them to try and identify what is it specifically that needs to be done and who should do it. Once they have agreed on their solutions, ask them to record these on Post-it notes and stick them over the barriers on their sheet.

Depending on the number of groups you have, you may wish to ask groups to move around again so that they can have a look at the barriers and suggested solutions from another group, again leaving a member behind if required. Ask groups to see if they can add any further suggestions to the existing solutions.

Once you are satisfied that enough solutions have been produced and that groups have had a chance to have a thorough look at what other groups have come up with, ask each group to feed back the barriers on their sheet, along with their proposed solutions. Ask groups to feed back a couple of ideas at the time. It is a good idea to record these ideas, either on a piece of flip chart in the training room, or ask someone else to take notes while feedback is being given. Type up feedback afterwards and send it to the course participants, with agreed actions, so that they can see that their suggestions are being taken forward and acted upon.

When taking feedback, it may be useful to have members of the training team, such as Local Training Managers or the County Training Administrator, or members of wider Scouting, such as the County Commissioner or District Commissioners on hand as there may be action points for them to take away or local issues that they need to comment on.

# Session 3

## Debate

### Session objectives

- to provide an opportunity for TAs to meet and discuss issues
- to come up with some suggestions for ways to overcome these issues

### Great for...

- getting your TAs together to discuss issues
- identifying potential solutions
- planning for the future

### Resources

- marker pens
- flipchart paper

### Time

This will depend on the number of participants that you have in attendance, but will be between an hour and an hour and a half.

### Method

This session works really well if you have an issue, or something that you think may be an issue, in your District or County that you wish to get your TAs to discuss and come up with potential solutions to. You will need to identify the topic that you would like your TAs to discuss before the event and prepare a statement or question for this, for example 'validation standards are inconsistent'.

### Ideas for potential discussions:

- validation standards are inconsistent
- learners are not making progress
- should TAs work with learners from their own Group?
- what are the barriers to being an effective TA?
- what should we do about non-attendance at training?

Set up the training room with enough tables and chairs for small groups to sit around. Ensure that you have organised the groups beforehand so that participants are sat with people they do not know. It is a good idea to organise experienced facilitators to sit with each group to ensure that they complete the task and remain on track.

Introduce the topic that you would like TAs to discuss and ask them to come up with a list of reasons why the statement might be true (or untrue - depending on what you want to get out of the session). If you are limited in the time you have available, you can ask TAs to come up with a certain number of reasons. Ask TAs to list their reasons in order of importance and record them on flip chart paper. Encourage TAs not to jump to conclusions, but to carefully debate the issues.

Once the task is complete, in plenary, ask each group to feed back their list of reasons. There will more than likely be some overlap between the ideas that each group has come up with. Identify what you think the key reasons are and assign one of these to each of the groups. Ensure you have enough key reasons for each group to have one. Ask groups to develop some ideas for how that particular issue could be overcome. Encourage participants to debate the issue rather than looking for instant solutions.

Once groups have come up with their solutions, in plenary, ask them to feed back their ideas to the rest of the group. Record these solutions on flipchart paper. Thank participants for their involvement in the session and for giving their feedback. Highlight what you are planning to do with the feedback and ideas that have been generated today.



### **Trainer note**

One of the purposes of this session is to generate some suggestions for ways in which potential issues can be resolved. Therefore, the ideas and solutions produced should be taken away and acted upon. After 6 months, it may be a good idea to feed back to your TAs what has happened since the session and how their feedback has been used.

# Session 4

## TA Recruitment

### Session objectives

- to identify the skills and qualities of an effective TA
- to encourage TAs to think of ways in which they can recruit more TAs

### Great for...

- getting your TAs together to discuss issues
- getting your TAs to think about the responsibilities of their role
- generating ideas for TA recruitment
- planning for future recruitment

### Resources

- marker pens
- flipchart paper
- post-it notes

### Time

This will depend on the number of participants that you have in attendance, but will be between an hour and an hour and a half. This session will be shorter if you use the lists of skills and qualities already generated in the TA toolkit session.

### Method

In small groups, ask TAs to draw a person/face on a piece of flipchart paper to represent a TA. Advise that you would like them to think about and discuss what skills and qualities are needed to make an effective TA – listening skills, patience, being organised, etc. Ask groups to list these on the flipchart paper around the TA that they have drawn.



### Trainer note

If you chose to run this session after the TA Toolkit session the lists of skills and qualities that participants have already produced can be used for this task.

It is worth bearing in mind that the appointment of TAs does differ locally and some Counties may have devolved this responsibility to the Districts. You will need to find out how TA recruitment is run in your County before running this session.

Once groups have finished listing the skills and qualities, ask groups to think about and discuss where they might be able to get people with some of these skills from. Ask them to record their ideas on

Post-it notes and stick them around their TAs. Some ideas to help generate conversations if TAs are struggling with this part of the task are listed below:

- recent/existing Wood Badge holders
- GSLs or line managers
- individuals who are looking for support roles, but not regular involvement in Scouting
- Scout Active Support members
- retired Scouters
- other organisations – Guide Leaders, other volunteers, etc.
- people from local schools/colleges
- members of the local community
- professional coaches, mentors or assessors
- professional managers

Ask groups to feed back their ideas. When taking feedback, it may be useful to have members of the training team, or any other relevant colleagues, on hand as there may be action points for them to take away or local issues that they need to comment on. It is a good idea to type up feedback afterwards and to send it round to the course participants, with agreed actions, so that they can see that their suggestions are being taken forward and acted upon.

If the following points are not mentioned by the groups, it is worth highlighting them:

- before any recruitment is done, TA teams may need to take a look at their team and ensure everyone is still happy in the role and wants to continue
- it is useful to review how learners are allocated to TAs – are there any particular roles or types of learners that need TAs? If so, this should be factored in when recruiting TAs
- TAs doesn't come ready made, so it is unlikely that they will find many people with all the required skills and qualities. However, developing people with potential through training and support can help to develop a strong TA team
- it is important to focus on what is achievable – they are not going to recruit 10 new TAs straight away, but persistence and planning can pay off
- they should look everywhere for potential new TAs – you never know where you might be able to find them
- recruitment for all adult roles, not just TA roles, is the responsibility of everyone in Scouting
- TAs do not need to be experienced Scouters – they just need the right skills and qualities for the role
- any new TAs that are recruited will need to go through the relevant appointment process. More information on the appointment process for TAs can be found in POR: The Appointment Process

# Session 5

## Validation, Validation, Validation

### Session objectives

- to help TAs get the best out of the learners that they work with
- to help TAs better understand how to conduct effective validations and ensure consistency

### Great for...

- getting your TAs together to discuss issues
- getting your TAs to think about the responsibilities of their role
- getting TAs to think about how they conduct validations
- reminding TAs of the importance of ensuring that learners have understood the learning that they have completed

### Resources

- learner packs – you will need to create enough of these for small groups to have one pack each (you may need to create different packs for the different roles that your TAs work with - for example, if you have specific TAs that work with managers in Scouting). See the additional support material for this session for details of sample learner packs that you can put together for this task
- FS500000 – Validation Processes and Guidelines can be used as a hand out if required

### Time

This will depend on the number of participants that you have in attendance, but will be between an hour and an hour and a half.

### Method

Ask your TAs to get in to small groups. Give each group a learner pack and explain that in their packs they will find some information on their learner, a list of modules that the learner still needs to validate, a list of modules that the learner is planning to validate today, and some evidence that the learner has presented to them, as the learner's TA, to validate these modules. They will also find some background information on their learner to put the situation in to context.

Advise groups to imagine that the learner detailed in their pack is their learner and that they are planning to validate the highlighted modules today. Advise that the learner has presented the evidence contained in the pack to them today. Highlight that as a TA it is important to ensure that learners have understood that learning that they have undertaken, which is why validation is always essential. Ask groups to:

- look at the modules that the learner is planning to validate today and work out which evidence could go towards validating which module
- think about what further questions, evidence or discussion they would need to have in order to satisfactorily validate these modules



### **Trainer note**

The evidence presented alone will not be enough to validate the modules and TAs should feel that further questions, evidence or discussion will be required in order to fully validate the module. TAs may get side tracked on the fact that the evidence is not sufficient and that it cannot be used to validate the module. If this is the case, acknowledge this and ensure that groups do think about what further questions they would ask the learner to check their understanding and ascertain that they have completed the required validation criteria.

Remind groups of the background information they have on their learner. It will be useful to bear this in mind as their learner could have some skills, knowledge or experience from outside of Scouting that will help them with their validations.

The factsheet Validation Processes and Guidelines (FS500000) contains some validation best practice. This could be summarised as part of the feedback element of this session, or used as a hand out for participants.

When ready, ask groups to feed back their ideas. You may need to ask them to summarise their case study to the rest of the group if you are using several different learner packs.

As an alternative method, and to make this session more realistic, you could run it with members of the training team playing the learners. This would allow them to show their level of knowledge and understanding to the TAs and will allow the TAs to pose questions to them and discuss what they have learnt.

# Session 6

## Updates to the Adult Training Scheme

### Session objectives

- to provide information about recent updates to the Adult Training Scheme
- to provide information about upcoming changes to the Adult Training Scheme

### Great for...

- keeping your TAs up to date with recent updates to the Adult Training Scheme
- keeping your TAs up to date with upcoming changes to the Adult Training Scheme
- ensuring that your TAs have the correct information available to them

### Resources

- copies of the Updates to the Adult Training Scheme hand out – the most recent version is available from the Member Resources area of [www.scouts.org.uk](http://www.scouts.org.uk) or by emailing the Adult Support team on [adult.support@scouts.org.uk](mailto:adult.support@scouts.org.uk)

### Time

30 minutes

### Method

This session can be run as a plenary session to highlight the changes to the Adult Training Scheme over the last few years.

The Updates to the Adult Training Scheme hand out should be used as a script for this session. You may feel that you need to create a Power Point presentation or similar to accompany this session. The Updates to the Adult Training Scheme document can then be used as a hand out for participants.



# Session 7

## Question Time

### Session objectives

- to allow TAs to pose questions to members of the training team and relevant others
- to act as an information sharing platform for TAs, members of the training team and relevant others

### Great for...

- rounding off your TA support event
- allowing your TAs to get their questions answered
- ensuring that your TAs have the correct information available to them

### Resources

- question slips (optional)

### Time

Around 30 minutes

### Method

Set up the training room with enough chairs for all participants. At the front of the room, set up a long table, with enough chairs for all panellists. Before the event, you will need to ensure that you have asked members of the training team, or any other relevant local volunteers, such as District or County Commissioners, to come along and act as panellists. Ensure that they are fully briefed and are aware that they will be answering questions posed by the TAs in attendance.

On the day of the event, you may wish to prepare question slips and hand them out to participants when they arrive to fill in with their questions. You will need to collect them in before this session and hand them out to the relevant panellist to answer. They can then read out the questions and address them as part of this session. You may wish to have some sample questions and answers prepared before the event in case no questions are posed.

To run this session without the question slips, set up the room as described above. Once participants have arrived, invite them to pose questions to members of the panel. They may pose questions to a specific person or to all the panellists in general. Allow participants a sufficient amount of time to ask their questions. Anything that cannot be answered on the day should be taken away and the answer fed back to participants after the event.

If questions are not submitted beforehand, the panel will not have had time to give thought to their responses, therefore it is worth bearing in mind that the answers given may be less complete.

# Session 8

## Ongoing Support

### Session objectives

- to find out what forms of ongoing support your TAs would like
- to act as a networking and idea sharing platform for TAs

### Great for...

- rounding off your TA support event
- planning for the future
- getting feedback from TAs on how the event has gone and would they would like to see happen in the future

### Resources

- marker pens
- flipchart paper

### Time

30 minutes

### Method

Recap what has been covered so far at your event or series of events if you have run several. If you already have plans for future events, highlight these to your TAs.

Advise that you would like to find out how the TAs attending want to be supported going forward and if there is any further support and guidance that they feel is needed for TAs, either on a local or national level.

Ask small groups to discuss this and come up with some suggestions as to how they would like to be supported in the future. Ask them to record their suggestions and feed them back to the rest of the group. When taking feedback, it may be useful to have members of the training team, or any other relevant colleagues, on hand as there may be action points for them to take away or local issues that they need to comment on. It is a good idea to type up feedback afterwards and to send it round to the course participants, with agreed actions, so that they can see that their suggestions are being taken forward and acted upon.

## Conclusion

The role of the TA is crucial to the success of the Adult Training Scheme and TAs require your care, attention, support and guidance to achieve the best they can in their role, and to help adult learners do the same. The sessions in this guide have been designed to help you achieve this and to promote networking, share good practice, overcome challenges and keep your TAs up to date. As highlighted previously, these sessions are not a definitive script for your course and can be adapted to suit your own local needs. Hopefully you now have some ideas about sessions that could work for you and your TAs.

Ongoing support and updates for TAs may be something that has not been covered in your District or County previously, or you may just be looking for some new ideas for your next TA event. Whatever the case, this should be an ongoing piece of work and it is a good idea to set up a regular programme of events for your TAs. Benefits of this could include the work of TAs being more effective, the number of TAs increasing and more adult volunteers completing their Wood Badges within the allocated time frame.

If you were waiting for the perfect time to start putting together an event for your TAs, this could be it. Use this guide as you wish, take ideas from it and continue to grow and develop the support available to your TAs, both now and in the future.

Please do let us know how you get on with using the toolkit. In addition, if you have any extra sessions that you have run locally that you think could be added to the next version of the toolkit, please do let us know by emailing [adult.support@scouts.org.uk](mailto:adult.support@scouts.org.uk).