

MANAGING ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES.

A resource for Managers of the
Activity Permit Scheme (MAPS)



A resource to support Managers of the Activity Permit Scheme (MAPS) through the process of supporting their County Assessors

The role of MAPS is to manage and support the adventurous activity permit scheme within their County / Area / Region (Scotland) – from now on referred to as County. This is important not only ensuring a fully functioning scheme to support leaders locally, but also to ensure we have a robust and well managed scheme in all areas, that can be moderated and documented for any external parties that need to be able to see what it is we do.

MAPS do not necessarily have to carry out all the tasks detailed here themselves, but need to ensure that they are all carried out within their County. A basic Task List for MAPS can be found at www.scouts.org.uk/maps.

The role of MAPS can be divided into four areas:

- 1. Supporting County Assessors**
- 2. Supporting those applying for permits and facilitating opportunities for them**
- 3. Supporting Commissioners with their role within the activity permit scheme**
- 4. Carrying out the annual County moderation of the activity permit scheme**

Support for each of these areas can be found in this resource.

Version 3 – Nov 2013



A summary of MAPS action points found throughout this resource:

1. Supporting County Assessors

Appointment

- 1 Identify potential County Assessor
- 2 Ensure they have the relevant external qualification for their role
- 3 Ensure their qualification is current and they can show recent commitment to that activity
- 4 Ensure that they have the correct qualities for the role
- 5 Fill in the relevant forms and send to the County Appointments Secretary
- 6 Appointments Secretary will forward the AA or CR form to the County Appointments Advisory Committee for approval and record the role on the Membership database when it is approved
- 7 Induct the new Assessor into their role
- 8 Ensure that the Assessor has a Training Adviser to support them through Module 1, Module 25 for Activity Assessors and with a Personal Learning Plan
- 9 Their role should change from Provisional to Full once their criminal record check has been completed and logged on the system

Carry out the role of an Assessor

- 1 Facilitate the organisation of assessment courses
- 2 Facilitate opportunities for assessors to work with assessors from other Counties
- 3 Facilitate opportunities for assessors to work with or shadow other assessors
- 4 Arrange assessor meetings for assessors to review previous assessments
- 5 Ensure opportunities for CPD
- 6 Carry out informal ongoing reviews

Review appointment

- 1 Carry out a formal review for each Assessor at the end of period of appointment
- 2 Ensure the Assessor has carried out a criminal records check within the previous five years
- 3 Ensure the Assessor still holds the relevant external qualification for their role
- 4 Ensure the Assessor has validated module 25 for Activity Assessors
- 5 Ensure the Assessor has CPD (minimum one day internal, one day external / technical) within the period of their appointment
- 6 Ensure the Assessor has a continued understanding of their role and identify any gaps or training requirements
- 7 Ensure the Assessor has the time, enthusiasm and energy for the role
- 8 Ensure the Assessor is happy to continue with the role
- 9 Complete form AR and send it to the Appointments Secretary

2. Supporting those applying for permits and facilitating opportunities for them

- 1 Ensure leaders understand the permit scheme and the opportunities it provides
- 2 Manage assessment courses
- 3 Promote assessment opportunities to leaders
- 4 Help find Assessors for permit applicants
- 5 Promote training opportunities
- 6 Ensure permit holders are aware of expiration dates

3. Supporting Commissioners with their role within the activity permit scheme

- 1 Ensure Commissioners are aware of their role within the permit scheme
- 2 Ensure Commissioners know where to get support for their role within the permit scheme
- 3 Ensure Commissioners are recording permits on the membership database

4. Carrying out the annual County moderation of the activity permit scheme

- 1 Moderate the County activity permit scheme management using the self moderation form
- 2 Identify action plans to meet areas that have not been met
- 3 Agree moderation and action plans with County Commissioner
- 4 Carry out any action plans that have been assigned to you
- 5 Send completed moderation form to UK Activities team when County has been selected for sampling

1. Supporting County Assessors

We have divided the life of an Assessor into three parts:

- a. **Appointment**
- b. **Carry out the role of an Assessor**
- c. **Review appointment**

a. Appointment

When County Assessors are appointed they need to go through the appointment process, as with any other adult appointed within Scouting. As MAPS it will be you that recommends all potential County Assessors to your County Appointments Advisory Committee for approval.

The appointment of County Assessors starts with identifying people with the potential to hold these roles. They will need to be people who are active within the activity, often outside as well as inside Scouting. It may be they are people who have been members of County activity teams for a while and you have supported them through the process of gaining skills and experience so that they can gain the qualifications required, or it may be that you can identify practitioners currently outside Scouting who are happy to come in and use their skills for this specific role. If they still need to gain the qualifications needed for the role you can find details of funding available to support them through this at www.scouts.org.uk/activitiesfunding. You will need to check that they have the required qualification (as detailed in FS120104 www.scouts.org.uk/fs120104) and that it is current before you nominate them for appointment as an Assessor. For some activities these qualifications expire over time if not renewed and some NGBs require ongoing membership to keep the qualification valid. You will also need to ensure they understand and have the correct qualities for the role. Being expert technically at an activity does not automatically make someone a good Assessor.

Once a potential Assessor has been identified, had the role and requirements explained to them and agreed to take on the role you will need to work through the relevant forms with them as outlined below:

In Northern Ireland or Scotland, they will need to complete the AA Form and the relevant Criminal Records check form (Access NI or PVG form) if relevant.

If they are new to Scouting in England or Wales, they will need to complete the AA Form which will be used to apply for their role in Scouting and their DBS check.

If they are an existing volunteer in England or Wales with a valid DBS, they will need to complete the Change of Role (CR) Form.

All AA and CR Forms can be downloaded from the members resources area of the website or ordered from Scout Shops. The AA or CR form will provide your nomination to the County Appointments Advisory Committee for them to be appointed as an Assessor. The key parts you need to ensure are:

- The role title is correct. This will be Assessor for [ACTIVITY] and needs to include any categories (summer, B1-B2, open water etc) as listed in FS120104 www.scouts.org.uk/fs120104. The Appointments Secretary will use this information when recording the appointment on the Membership database.
- That full or associate membership is ticked. The minimum requirement for an Assessor is that they are an associate member, but if they are happy to they can become a full member.
- That it is for County (or Regional in Scotland) level.
- That there is a review date no more than 5 years after the start date (although this can be shorter if required).

The forms need to be sent to the County Appointments Secretary, who will record details of this role on the Membership database and forward to the County Appointments Advisory Committee for approval. The role will show as Provisional until details of the criminal record check are added at which point it will become Full.

Although the induction process covers all elements of the appointment (everything you have done for the Assessor so far is part of this), once they are appointed it is important they have a formal induction so that they are fully aware of everything to do with their role. This should cover areas such as; what their role includes, what support is available, useful contacts, how the County deals with assessments etc. It is critically important that this induction takes place for all new Assessors so that they are not just left in their new role not knowing what is happening. Induction is an ongoing process that may last several months.

Along with an induction, as an adult member in a new role it is important that all Assessors are assigned a Training Adviser. The Training Adviser will be able to support the Assessor through Module 1 and Module 25 for Activity Assessors, which is the required training for Assessors, and also put together a Personal Learning Plan for any other training needs identified based on the individual involved.

Full details and support for the appointment process can be found at www.scouts.org.uk/appointment.

So in summary, the points that you need to pick up for the appointment of a County Assessor are:

- 1 Identify potential County Assessor
- 2 Ensure they have the relevant external qualification for their role
- 3 Ensure their qualification is current and they can show recent commitment to that activity
- 4 Ensure that they have the correct qualities for the role
- 5 Fill in the relevant forms and send to the County Appointments Secretary
- 6 Appointments Secretary will forward the AA or CR form to the County Appointments Advisory Committee for approval and record the role on the Membership database when it is approved
- 7 Induct the new Assessor into their role
- 8 Ensure that the Assessor has a Training Adviser to support them through Module 1, Module 25 for Activity Assessors and with a Personal Learning Plan
- 9 Their role should change from Provisional to Full once their criminal record check has been completed and logged on the system

b. Carry out the role of an Assessor

Once appointed to the role, Assessors will need support in carrying out their role. The main areas for this are likely to be:

- The organisation of assessment courses. It is recognised that assessments with multiple Assessors and applicants are better than one on one assessments in most cases. Arranging assessment courses allows you to get the most Assessors and applicants involved at one time so that ideas can be shared, different opinions sought etc. It can also allow you to keep costs down, work with Assessors from other Counties and promote your courses to potential applicants from other Counties. Having course dates organised also allows your Assessors to plan what time they are able to give to Scouting, and allows applicants to find courses at times that are good for them.

As MAPS you are in a position to work with your Assessors, and any others who will be involved, to put together a diary of assessment courses across the activities. You are also in a position to liaise with MAPS from other Counties to make best use of Assessors on a Regional basis by having Assessors working with those from others Counties, co-ordinating diaries to avoid conflicts, making sure there are opportunities for leaders right across the Region etc.

- Facilitate opportunities for your assessors to work with each other. This will include; working with and shadowing other assessors, working with assessors from other Counties, and running assessor meetings so that assessors can discuss previous assessments that they have carried out.

Shadowing other assessors and working with assessors from others Counties are most easily covered through assessment courses run across Counties, but you will also need to help facilitate this for your other assessors, particularly for activities where there are few assessors and few permit applications so less opportunities to run assessment courses. This could be through putting them in contact with other assessors of similar activities or letting them know when there are assessment courses running for other activities that they could attend.

Assessor meetings are important to provide peer support for your assessors and also to allow any assessment that was seen by only one assessor to be discussed. This is important to help provide a level standard of assessing across all assessors, and where this is combined with other Counties, a level standard of assessing across Counties. Assessors should talk openly about their assessments and decisions made in a safe environment.

- Ensure your Assessors have opportunities for Continued Personal Development (CPD). It is vital that all Assessors stay up to date within their activity and also with the skills they will need for assessing. You should be able to help provide the opportunities for this, possibly including; finding NGB updates or workshops for them to attend, bringing in technical advisers to run workshops and update sessions, or running County or Regional Assessor workshops. If running your own workshops then the UK Activities team can provide support to you in putting this together and running it.

The minimum CPD requirement for all Assessors is two days within the five years of their appointment and should include at least one day internally within Scouting and at least one day of external/technical updates. This should however be seen as a minimum rather than a target.

- Providing ongoing support to your Assessors through informal ongoing reviews. These are particularly important for Assessors as their role is likely to be more sporadic in its time commitment than other roles that have ongoing contact with the same members of Scouting. There is no set format for informal reviews as this will differ depending on the circumstances and individuals involved, but the important areas are; the Assessor feels involved and needed, they are a source of support, they are informal and regular, they are appropriate to the situation, and they are treated as important.

So in summary, the points that you need to pick up to support a County Assessor in their role are:

- 1 Facilitate the organisation of assessment courses
- 2 Facilitate opportunities for assessors to work with assessors from other Counties
- 3 Facilitate opportunities for assessors to work with or shadow other assessors
- 4 Arrange assessor meetings for assessors to review previous assessments
- 5 Ensure opportunities for CPD
- 6 Carry out informal ongoing reviews

c. Review appointment

As with all other adult roles in Scouting, Assessors roles need to be reviewed at the end of the appointment period (generally five years). This will help decide whether the Assessor appointment should be renewed or cancelled, or whether the Assessor wishes to change role. You can find a number of resources to support you in carry out a review, such as how to carry out a review, what to cover, how to record the review etc at www.scouts.org.uk/review.

If the outcome of the review is that the Assessor appointment is going to be renewed then there are a number of checks that you will need to make before this can happen:

- They have had a criminal record check within the last five years (Criminal Records Bureau, Disclosure Scotland or Access Northern Ireland), or they need to complete another one now.
- The qualification required for their role (as detailed in FS120104 www.scouts.org.uk/fs120104) remains valid. For some activities these qualifications expire over time if not renewed and some NGBs require ongoing membership to keep the qualification valid.
- They have validated module 25 for Activity Assessors.
- They have a minimum of two days of Continued Personal Development within the last five years. This should be a minimum rather than a target, and should include at least one day of internal Scouting and at least one day of external / technical ongoing learning. Internal workshops are likely to be run by Scout Counties or Regions, while external ongoing learning could be update workshops run by NGBs, days out with Technical Advisers looking at up to date techniques and practises, or training days for further qualifications.

As well as these specific checks of the Assessor if they are going to renew the role it is important that the Assessor has a continued understanding of their role and what is expected of them. This should give the opportunity for both the Assessor and yourself to identify any training opportunities or needs they may have. And lastly it is very important that the Assessor remains enthused about the role, has the time and energy to carry it out, and critically, is happy to continue.

Once you have met with the Assessor and carried out the review you will need to fill in Form AR (available at www.scouts.org.uk/appointmentforms) and forward this to the County Appointment Secretary, whether the recommendation is for renewal, reassignment or cancelling the appointment.

Full details and support for the review process can be found at www.scouts.org.uk/review.

So in summary, the points that you need to pick up for the review of a County Assessor are:

- 1 Carry out a formal review for each Assessor at the end of period of appointment
- 2 Ensure the Assessor has carried out a criminal records check within the previous five years
- 3 Ensure the Assessor still holds the relevant external qualification for their role
- 4 Ensure the Assessor has validated module 25 for Activity Assessors
- 5 Ensure the Assessor has CPD (minimum one day internal, one day external / technical) within the period of their appointment
- 6 Ensure the Assessor has a continued understanding of their role and identify any gaps or training requirements
- 7 Ensure the Assessor has the time, enthusiasm and energy for the role
- 8 Ensure the Assessor is happy to continue with the role
- 9 Complete form AR and send it to the Appointments Secretary

2. Supporting those applying for permits and facilitating opportunities for them

While the permit scheme is an enabling device, designed to allow leaders within Scouting to lead adventurous activities without the need for external professional level qualifications, to some leaders without an understanding of the scheme it can seem like a barrier to the provision of activities. It is therefore important that you ensure leaders in your County are aware of the opportunities it can provide and the way it can be personalised to the level they wish to lead at. This could be through; providing contact details for leaders to get advice and information, attending leaders meetings to explain the scheme and its benefits, ensuring leaders on module 17 training are receiving correct information and having the benefits of the scheme explained, providing information stands at County and District events, or any other method that you find works for you locally.

As mentioned in 'Supporting County Assessors' the most effective style of assessment is assessment courses which need to be promoted widely throughout your County and beyond. Along with assessment courses there will also be times where applicants will need to find an individual Assessor. This may be for an activity that you have no assessment courses running, for a very specialist restriction on a permit that isn't easily assessed on a course, or due to timescales and availability they are not able to attend any of the assessment courses running. In this situation there are three ways of finding an Assessor, and it is likely that applicants will appreciate your help and contacts in this search. These are:

- See if there is an Assessor in your County. This should be relatively easy for you to help them with and put them in contact with if available.
- Use an Assessor from another County. This could be an assessment course that the MAPS from that County has promoted to you or has been advertised on the website, or it could be an individual Assessor that you have found through contact with other MAPS.
- Use an external Assessor. This is someone who has nothing to do with Scouting but has the qualification required for an external Assessor as shown in FS120104 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme – Approved Assessors. They could be a technical adviser that you use in the County to provide training and assessment, a self employed instructor working within their activity, or an instructor working at an activity centre or provider. They will need to be given a copy of the relevant assessment checklist and ensure they are aware of what it is they are assessing and what they are signing off.

While many leaders will already have the skills needed to get a permit, there will be others who will be looking for training and to gain new skills to bring them up to this level. Providing, finding and promoting these opportunities is important in ensuring leaders have the skills to be able to lead these activities for young people in Scouting. Often this will be through County Active Support units specialising in a specific activity, or the County Activity Team, so these opportunities will just need promoting widely within the County. Other options are; to bring in



external technical advisers to run specialist training courses, to find courses being run by Scout campsites and activity centres, or to promote external activity courses such as NGB training courses.

And finally, it's important that all permit holders are aware of when their permit expires. Once a permit has expired that leader will not be able to lead the activity anymore until they have gained a new one, so they should be aware of the expiry date so that they can arrange to see an Assessor to be assessed for a new one before this happens. Reports of all permits, including expiry dates, can be pulled off the membership database, so a system of regularly doing this and informing permit holders whose expiry date is imminent can be set up. This may be something that you need to check Districts are doing, or it may be the County decides to look after themself.

So in summary, the points that you need to pick up to support those applying for permits are:

- 1 Ensure leaders understand the permit scheme and the opportunities it provides
- 2 Manage assessment courses
- 3 Promote assessment opportunities to leaders
- 4 Help find Assessors for permit applicants
- 5 Promote training opportunities
- 6 Ensure permit holders are aware of expiration dates

3. Supporting Commissioners with their role within the activity permit scheme

A key part of the activity permit scheme lies with the Commissioners, normally District Commissioners but also the County Commissioner for those with County appointments. As a general rule Commissioners are unlikely to be activities practitioners, so they will need supporting through their part of the scheme.

The Commissioners' role starts when an applicant brings them the back page of an assessment checklist with a recommendation from an Assessor. At this point Commissioners have a checklist of things to do listed in FS120103 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme – Commissioners' Guide (www.scouts.org.uk/fs120103). The key points you need to ensure Commissioners are aware of are:

- They know where to find FS120103 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme – Commissioners' Guide (www.scouts.org.uk/fs120103).
- They are aware that they can't grant anyone a permit without a recommendation from an Assessor.
- They check that the person supplying the recommendation is an approved Assessor.
- That areas two, three and four of the assessment are carried out, either by themselves or a designate.
- That any restrictions they place on a permit need to be justified to the applicant and can't be blanket restrictions for all permits they grant.
- That all permits must have an expiry date that is no further than five years away.
- That activity permit cards can be ordered from the Scout Information Centre to be given to all successful applicants.
- That they as Commissioners need to grant and sign every permit.
- That all permits when granted are recorded on the Membership database.

As well as from yourself Commissioners can find support through resources such as;

- ACC Activities (if this is different from yourself).
- County Activity Advisers.
- FS120103 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme – Commissioners' Guide (www.scouts.org.uk/fs120103).
- A-Z of Activities (www.scouts.org.uk/a-z) or FS120084 Scout Led Activities Index (www.scouts.org.uk/fs120084) for details of rules for section two.
- The Scout Information Centre (info.centre@scouts.org.uk).



When permits are granted it is important that Commissioners are reminded to record them on the Membership database. This will mean there is a single point that everyone can use to see who holds what permit. It also allows the easy identification of permits coming up to their expiry date to manage this process. Although the responsibility for this lies with Commissioners they can delegate it to Administrators or Appointment Secretaries. If they wish you to help support them in this your County Commissioner will need to record you as a County Administrator to allow you the appropriate access on the database.

So in summary, the points that you need to pick up to support Commissioners are:

- 1 Ensure Commissioners are aware of their role within the permit scheme
- 2 Ensure Commissioners know where to get support for their role within the permit scheme
- 3 Ensure Commissioners are recording permits on the membership database

4. Carrying out the annual County moderation of the activity permit scheme

Moderation of the activity permit scheme is a key part of the process, both to ensure that our young people are as safe as is practicable when taking part in adventurous activities and to be able to show that our internal permit scheme is robust and well managed. You have the key role in moderating the activity permit scheme within your County. This starts with carrying out the annual moderation. This needs to be done by the end of January each year, but you can start it whenever you like to ensure it is done on time based on your personal circumstances. There is a simple tick box form to use in carrying out this moderation (www.scouts.org.uk/activitiesmoderation). You can find support for this in FS120106 Adventurous Activity Permit Scheme – Moderation (www.scouts.org.uk/fs120106) which includes notes and guidance on each of the standards within the moderation form.

Where any minimum standards are not met you will need to identify an action plan to address this and ensure it will be met. Where any good practice standard is not met you are also encouraged to identify an action plan to aim towards this standard. There is space next to each standard on the moderation form to note the headlines of any action plan, and space at the back of the form for the full action plan. If you need any help and support in putting together these action plans then please contact the Activities office at UK Headquarters. We will get a member of the UK Activities team to work with you to help put an action plan together.

Once your moderation and action plan has been completed, before the end of January, you will need to get it agreed by your County Commissioner. They will be agreeing that it is an accurate representation of the activity permit scheme within the County. You will then need to work with your Commissioner to ensure that the action plans are assigned to suitable people / added to the County workplan and that these are carried out in a timely manner. This could include you carrying out any actions that are assigned to you.

Each year the UK Activities team will collect a sample of completed moderations. This is to allow the Scout Association to identify any trends and document the management and moderation of the permit scheme, it is not an extra check on the selected Counties. If your County has been selected for sampling you will be contacted in early February and just need to send your completed moderation form to the UK Activities team by the end of February.

So in summary, the points that you need to pick up to moderate the permit scheme in your County are:

- 1 Moderate the County activity permit scheme management using the self moderation form
- 2 Identify action plans to meet areas that have not been met
- 3 Agree moderation and action plans with County Commissioner
- 4 Carry out any action plans that have been assigned to you
- 5 Send completed moderation form to UK Activities team when County has been selected for sampling