

Nights Away Permit Scheme - Assessment Guide



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0845 300 1818

Introduction

This factsheet provides an overview for Nights Away Advisers assessing applicants for a nights away permit. It should be read in conjunction with Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) of The Scout Association. More detailed information on the scheme, for applicants and for Commissioners can be found in separate factsheets.

The Nights Away Permit Scheme

The Nights Away Permit Scheme promotes quality residential and camping experiences. It allows adults who have demonstrated their skill and knowledge to take young people away on nights away events. It also supports and encourages adults to acquire and improve the skills required to provide residential experiences.

The Nights Away Adviser's Role In Assessment

The role of the Nights Away Adviser is to carry out assessments of permit applicants' technical skills and experience. Based on this they pass a recommendation on to the responsible Commissioner (see FS120803 Nights Away Permit Scheme - Commissioners' Guide) of the Applicant, and it is the responsible Commissioner who actually grants the permit following other checks.

The Assessment

The assessment is not an opportunity to try and trick applicants. It is an assessment of their skills and experience. It should be based on the Nights Away Assessment Checklist and should contain no surprises for the applicant.

The three stages of an assessment are:

- 1 During planning of the event
- 2 During the event itself
- 3 After the event at the evaluation session.

The Nights Away Adviser should be working with the applicant throughout the planning of an event, as well as on the event itself, to provide support and advice as well as assessing competence. The aim is to ensure as many people as possible have the skills to be able to lead nights away events. Advisers should also be flexible in conducting assessments and recognise that camps and residential experiences can legitimately be run in a number of different ways. And please remember that even on nights away events where an assessment is taking place there needs to be a permit holder on site responsible for the event.

The Assessment Checklist provides you with the syllabus to work against. There is room after each assessment area for you to either tick it off as completed or write thoughts on areas for development.

There are a number of methods at your disposal to assess the applicant's competence level. Generally you should use elements of each of these in each assessment, the levels of each depending on factors such as the applicant, environment etc:

- 1 **Practical Assessment.** Working with the applicant during the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the event to assess their skills and competence.

The Scout Association

Gilwell Park Chingford London E4 7QW Tel + 44 (0)20 8433 7100 Fax + 44 (0)20 8433 7103 email info.centre@scouts.org.uk www.scouts.org.uk

- 2 **Theoretical Assessment.** Talking with the applicant, often through scenarios and examples, to find out how they would deal with them.
- 3 **Previous Experience.** Looking at the breadth, circumstances and currency of the applicant's experience in a leadership role on nights away events.
- 4 **Relevant Qualifications.** Any qualifications held such as renewing a previous permit, qualification from another organisation (i.e. GirlGuiding UK) etc.

The District Commissioner may also want you to assess the applicant's knowledge of the Scout Association nights away Rules and how these will affect them, and record this on the Assessment Checklist.

The Recommendation

After assessing an applicant you will need to come up with a recommendation for the level of permit to which you believe they will be able to lead nights away events, based on their technical skills.

Restrictions allow permits to be tailored to the level of skill, experience and personal requirements of each applicant, and should be based on their competence levels as seen within the assessment. Whenever you do make a recommendation for a restrictive permit you should be prepared to explain your reasons for this and what the applicant would need to improve to get a less restrictive permit.

You should record your recommended level of permit on the last page of the Assessment Checklist and give it to the applicant so that they can take it to their responsible Commissioner.

Permits are not section specific and Districts and Counties / Areas must not operate a policy of issuing only section specific permits. It is recognised that for some individuals a restriction to this effect may be appropriate. However consideration must be made on how this will affect the use of Young Leaders or other young people on the residential experience.

Useful Links

[FS120800](#) Nights Away Permit Scheme