



EU standards for Outdoor Animators

INDUSTRY OCCUPATIONAL DESCRIPTION for the OUTDOOR SECTOR



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

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English version

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Introduction

The importance of ‘safety’ in the outdoors industry sector

Outdoor activities, for whatever outcomes, by definition, almost **always take place in an outdoor environment**. Another key feature of activities in the outdoors is **the physical nature of the interaction of people – individuals and/or in groups/teams – with the outdoors environment**. The locations where these human interactions with the outdoors environment take place vary widely, from the relatively gentle and benign to the relatively and sometimes very challenging and potentially dangerous. This range, when linked with the range of types of clients, provides an extensive and sequential continuum for the levels of complexity, responsibility and managed risk inherent in the different occupations.

One key common feature is that of safety – the safety of all participants – clients and employees. Throughout the different occupations and the responsibilities within the occupations, **issues related to safety are a standard, recurring and key feature**. Safety is at the heart of what anyone working, learning or playing in the outdoors will be concerned about. Safety with Clients is not just something that gets mentioned in the safety talk at the start of the activity. **It is an ethos** that is present at every stage of the activity (including ‘before’ and ‘after’), and one which the staff member may involve the clients in to a greater or lesser degree.

Current thinking suggests that involving everyone in safety, appropriate to the clients, the activity and the environment, is perhaps the best way to maximise the safety of everyone. It also allows clients to become more involved in the understanding of the role and importance of risk and the management of risk as a positive aspect of outdoors activities.

This understanding of risk and its positive management has important implications for the developing of skills and attitudes of young people as they grow up in a challenging world. Increasingly, this ability to positively manage risk is seen as an important ‘lifeskill’ and one to which the outdoors can make a key, powerful contribution.

A. Occupation Title:

Assistant Outdoor Animator

B. Occupation Description:

The workplace of the assistant outdoor animator is mostly “in the field” and with the participants/clients, but, in some specific situations/activities, it can also be indoors. The assistant outdoor animator assists with planning and organisation of the different aspects of the delivery of outdoor activities, usually in the more practical areas. In this relatively ‘junior’ role, the specific “assistant outdoor animator task” may be in an initial training stage for new entrants into the industry/sector.

Consequently, it is quite usual that this role will experience a wide range of job activities as part of learning about the organisation. Therefore, depending on the size and type of organisation, it is expected that s/he will often undertake a wide range of basic tasks, including those related to office administration, maintenance and other practical activities.

S/he will work under direct or, as a minimum, indirect supervision.

C. Occupation Responsibilities:

Key area 1 - Animation and instruction: with participants, usually in an assisting role; Customer service; Works closely with supervisor and animators.

Key role: instruction, safety issues, customer satisfaction.

Key area 2 - Maintenance and logistics:

Set-up and preparation of facilities, activity bases and related equipment; Undertakes and administrates routine basic maintenance tasks on a possibly wide range of areas.

Key role: safety issues, assist with quality and security of the outdoor activities according to procedures.

Key area 3 - Commercial activities:

Assists with planning the products and services, with carrying out ‘front office’ tasks, and assists in promoting new products for participants/clients.

Key role: safety issues, assists with customer satisfaction and basic commercial duties

Key area 4 - General administration:

Collects feed back orally and literally, gives reports of action to supervisor; Participates in work meetings, helps to control quality and efficiency of customer service; Assists with general administration tasks.

Key role: safety issues, implementation of organisational policy in all actions.

D. Person Specification / requirements

Essential

Psychological: Creative, safety awareness, taking initiative, flexible, oral communicator, team player, takes some responsibility, hospitable, enthusiastic and outgoing, organisational skills, perseverance, reflecting, empathic and caring.

Physical: The assistant outdoor animator is physically capable of delivering the role across varying conditions and situations.

Social: Empathy, understand team roles and adapts according to supervisors requirements, acts with a degree of humility and sensitivity.

E. Continuous professional development and career progression

The outdoors industry sector is growing across Europe and therefore there are employment opportunities to be had in a wide range of occupations. However, it is clear that there are fewer occupations at the more senior levels in the sector. Furthermore, many jobs are seasonal – ranging from just a few weeks in the summer or winter to contracts which may be close to full time - 9 or 10 months per year. Consequently there are less full time, ‘permanent’ contract jobs to had, especially at the more senior, complex levels.

However, this should not, and usually does not, put entrants to the sector off from joining in terms of professional development and career progression. Entrants come into the sector at a range of levels and from a range of routes, including school, college, university and from jobs in other industry areas.

The sector is increasingly recognised as a powerful development ‘location’ for many important generic skills and attitudes such as communication skills, problem solving, risk management, team work, commitment, customer service, empathy, etc. These attributes are valued highly in a range of ‘people’ industry sectors, and beyond.

Employment profiles vary widely, and many mature and experienced outdoors practitioners are happy to hold a number of shorter contracts that gives them a variety of roles, sometimes with different organisations and in different outdoors activities and locations over the course of each year.

Vertical development and career progression are strong in the outdoors as the development of skills and attitudes is seen by many as an intrinsic and vital part of being a practitioner at whatever level. In the occupation descriptions, this translates into organisations and staff developing Assistant Outdoor Animators into the next levels up, with the different components of competence and capability planned into certainly the better organisations and employers. This will include both technical activity skills and qualifications as well as ‘softer’ skills and attitudes.

Qualifications and training may be delivered in a variety of contexts – in-house in some employers, by specialist outdoors training providers, by higher or further education and by general industry training organisations in the case of generic skills areas such as management.

A. Occupation Title:

Outdoor Animator

B. Occupation Description:

The workplace of the outdoor animator is mostly out “in the field” and with the participants/clients, but, in some specific situations/activities, it can also be indoors. The outdoor animator is responsible for planning, organising, and safely and successfully delivering outdoor activities.

There is also the possibility that s/he will be responsible for supporting one or more assistant outdoor animators. Besides the specific “outdoor animator task”, it is expected from the outdoor animator that s/he may be involved in aspects of administration, front office tasks and tasks related to activity base and equipment maintenance. .

C. Occupation Responsibilities:

Key area 1 - Animation and instruction:

Customer service, animating and instructing; Supervising/tutoring/supporting Assistant Outdoor Animator(s).

Key role: safety issues, instruction/animation, customer satisfaction.

Key area 2 - Maintenance, logistics:

Prepares and creates the facilities, takes care of maintenance and service issues of equipment and vehicles, including records, timetables, researches information of routes.

Key role: safety issues, quality and security of the outdoor activities according to procedures.

Key area 3 - Commercial activities:

Participate in selling, planning the products and services, carrying out front office tasks, gives technical information for sales person, promoting new products for participants/clients in action.

Key role: safety issues, assists with customer satisfaction and some commercial duties

Key area 4 - General administration:

Collects feed back orally and literally, gives reports of action to superior, participates in work meetings, controls quality and efficiency of customer service and products, completes safety related procedures and records.

Key role: safety issues, implementation of company policy in all actions.

D. Person Specification / requirements

Essential

Psychological: Commercially minded, independent, creative, aware of safety, take the initiative, flexible, oral power of expression, team player, feeling of responsibility, hospitable attitude, awareness, representative, capacity to think abstractly and critically analyse, vigorous, ability to anticipate; Problem solving, abstraction capacity, extravert, deals well with stress, organisational skills, perseverance, reflecting.

Physical: The outdoor animator has sufficient physical abilities to take care of participants/clients in the range of conditions which might be met in the delivery of their job role.

Social: Empathy, understand team roles and adapts according to participants/clients requirements within overall organisational guidelines and codes of practice.

E. Continuous professional development and career progression

The outdoors industry sector is growing across Europe and therefore there are employment opportunities to be had in a wide range of occupations. However, it is clear that there are fewer occupations at the more senior levels in the sector. Furthermore, many jobs are seasonal – ranging from just a few weeks in the summer or winter to contracts which may be close to full time - 9 or 10 months per year. Consequently there are less full time, ‘permanent’ contract jobs to had, especially at the more senior, complex levels.

However, this should not, and usually does not, put entrants to the sector off from joining in terms of professional development and career progression. Entrants come into the sector at a range of levels and from a range of routes, including school, college, university and from jobs in other industry areas.

The sector is increasingly recognised as a powerful development ‘location’ for many important generic skills and attitudes such as communication skills, problem solving, risk management, team work, commitment, customer service, empathy, etc. These attributes are valued highly in a range of ‘people’ industry sectors, and beyond.

Employment profiles vary widely, and many mature and experienced outdoors practitioners are happy to hold a number of shorter contracts that gives them a variety of roles, sometimes with different organisations and in different outdoors activities and locations over the course of each year.

Vertical development and career progression is strong in the outdoors as the development of skills and attitudes is seen by many as an intrinsic and vital part of being a practitioner at whatever level. In the occupation descriptions, this translates into organisations and staff developing Outdoor Animators into the next levels up, with the different components of competence and capability planned into certainly the better organisations and employers. This will include both technical activity skills and qualifications as well as ‘softer’ skills and attitudes.

Qualifications and training may be delivered in a variety of contexts – in-house with some employers, by specialist outdoors training providers, by higher or further education and by general industry training organisations in the case of generic skills areas such as management.

A. Occupation Title:

Specialised Outdoor Animator

B. Occupation Description:

The workplace of the specialised outdoor animator is mostly out “in the field” and with the participants/clients, but, in some specific situations/activities, it can also be indoors. The specialised outdoor animator is responsible for planning, organising, and safely and successfully delivering outdoor animator activities.

There is also the possibility that s/he will be responsible for supporting one or more assistant outdoor animators. Besides the specific “outdoor animator task”, it is expected from the specialised outdoor animator that s/he may be involved in aspects of administration, front office tasks and tasks related to activity base and equipment maintenance. .

This occupation holder works with more demanding participants/clients, in terms of either their particular needs, abilities or disabilities or at the higher levels of skill and hazardous environments/conditions. In this role, there are high demands concerning participants/clients, technical issues and/or environmental issues.

Safety and its management in dynamic and often challenging contexts will play a key part of this role.

There may be some delegation of tasks to assistant animators and others, and monitoring of these tasks, including support for the staff involved. More general supervision and management of some staff in a small team may also be a feature of the role.

As a specialist practitioner, s/he may contribute to organizational codes of practice and similar procedures and protocols and provide guidance and advice on specific specialist issues relating to their role.

C. Occupation Responsibilities:

Key area 1 - Animation, instruction, facilitation:

Developing specific programmes for participants/clients; customer service, animate and instructions, s/he is a leading guide and is the mentor of his/her team.

Key role: leader of safety issues, customer satisfaction, technical and/or instruction expert.

Key area 2 - Maintenance, logistics and productions:

Prepares and creates the specific facilities, takes care of maintenance and special service issues of equipment and vehicles, timetables, researches information of routes, adapt the content of the service according to observations.

Key role: Safety issues, quality and security of the outdoor activities according to procedures and environment.

Key area 3 - Commercial activities:

Selling, planning the products and services, gives technical information for sales persons, promoting new products for participants/clients in action and prospects.

Key role: safety issues, product development, customer service and sales

Key area 4 - General administration:

Collects feed back orally and literally, gives reports of action to manager, participates in work meeting, controls quality and efficiency of customer service/products, completes documents , he or she monitors the safety plan; Contributes to organisations policies and procedures

Key role: safety issues, implementation of company policy in all actions.

D. Person Specification / requirements

Essential

Psychological: Leadership, commercial, independent, creative, awareness of safety/risk management, taking initiative, flexible, oral power of expression, team player, feeling of responsibility, hospitable quality, awareness, representative, analytic able to anticipate, enthusiastic, problem solving, capacity to think abstractly and critically analyse, extravert/outgoing, deals well with stress, organisational skills, perseverance, reflecting, expertise related to the role.

Physical: The specialised outdoor animator has sufficient physical abilities to take care of participants/clients in conditions that may be encountered.

Social: Empathy, understand team roles and adapts according to participants/clients requirements.

E. Continuous professional development and career progression

The outdoors industry sector is growing across Europe and therefore there are employment opportunities to be had in a wide range of occupations. However, it is clear that there are fewer occupations at the more senior levels in the sector. Furthermore, many jobs are seasonal – ranging from just a few weeks in the summer or winter to contracts which may be close to full time - 9 or 10 months per year. Consequently there are less full time, ‘permanent’ contract jobs to had, especially at the more senior, complex levels.

However, this should not, and usually does not, put entrants to the sector off from joining in terms of professional development and career progression. Entrants come into the sector at a range of levels and from a range of routes, including school, college, university and from jobs in other industry areas.

The sector is increasingly recognised as a powerful development ‘location’ for many important generic skills and attitudes such as communication skills, problem solving, risk management, team work, commitment, customer service, empathy, etc. These attributes are valued highly in a range of ‘people’ industry sectors, and beyond.

Employment profiles vary widely, and many mature and experienced outdoors practitioners are happy to hold a number of shorter contracts that gives them a variety of roles, sometimes with different organisations and in different outdoors activities and locations over the course of each year.

Vertical development and career progression is strong in the outdoors as the development of skills and attitudes is seen by many as an intrinsic and vital part of being a practitioner at whatever level. In the occupation descriptions, this translates into organisations and staff developing Specialist Outdoor Animators into the next levels up, with the different components of competence and capability planned into certainly the better organisations and employers. This will include both technical activity skills and qualifications as well as ‘softer’ skills and attitudes. Progression may move to higher activity provision levels or more towards management.

Qualifications and training may be delivered in a variety of contexts – in-house in some employers, by specialist outdoors training providers, by higher or further education and by general industry training organisations in the case of generic skills areas such as management.

A. Occupation Title:

Outdoor Coordinator/Supervisor

B. Occupation Description:

The role of the outdoor coordinator/supervisor is often “in the field” and sometimes with the participants/clients, but there may also be aspects of the role related to management of staff and programmes and also some commercial aspects and administration.

The Coordinator/Supervisor organises and manages the work programmes and resources (especially staff) to deliver the organisation’s products and services. A key aspect of this is the supervision or management of staff... assistant animators/animators, etc.. This might also include responsibility for the training and ongoing development of staff, or the planning and management of this process through others

In this role, there are high demands concerning participants/clients, technical issues or environmental issues. Awareness of all safety issues relating to the organisation’s work is an important feature.

C. Occupation Responsibilities:

Key area 1 - Animation and instruction:

Animates/instructs, is responsible for customer service performance.

Key area 1b - Leads/manages the animating team, mentor of the team

Plans/manages work programmes and related resource allocation; Liaises with participants/clients in planning activities; Coordinate the training and development of staff whom they supervise;

Key role: leader of safety issues, customer liaison/service, manager of the team, leadership.

Key area 2 - Maintenance, logistics and programmes:

Plans, controls and creates the facilities, controls maintenance and special service issues of equipment and vehicles, timetables, plans programmes and related activities such as route planning.

Key role: Safety issues, quality and security of the outdoor activities according to procedures and environment, developing procedures.

Key area 3 - Commercial activities:

Selling, planning and marketing the products and services, subcontracting, quality control of subcontracts and services, gives technical information for sales person, promoting new products for participants/clients in action and prospects, focused on financial results, is aware of the overview of the sector/market and competitors.

Key role: safety issue, product development, customer service and sales, industry/sector awareness

Key area 4 - General administration:

Controls collecting feed back orally and literally, gives reports of action to manager, organises and leads work meetings, controls quality and efficiency of customer service, products, controls and ensures completion of

safety and related procedures and records; Monitors the safety plan; Manages/supervises animator staff including their ongoing performance and development needs; Contributes to overall organisation management and performance.

Key role: safety issues, implementation of company policy, legislation, insurance, sustainability/environmental issues and human resource management/development.

D. Person Specification / requirements

Essential

Psychological: Leadership, commercial, independent, creative, aware of safety, taking initiative, flexible, oral power of expression, team player, feeling of responsibility, hospitable quality, awareness, representative, analytic able to anticipate, enthusiastic, problem solving, capacity to think abstractly and critically analyse, extravert, deals well with stress, organisational skills, perseverance, reflecting.

Physical: The co-ordinative outdoor animator has sufficient physical abilities to take care of participants/clients in conditions that may be encountered.

Social: Empathy, understands team roles and adapts according to participants/clients requirements.

E. Continuous professional development and career progression

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Vertical development and career progression is strong in the outdoors as the development of skills and attitudes is seen by many as an intrinsic and vital part of being a practitioner at whatever level. In the occupation descriptions, this translates into organisations and staff developing Outdoor Co-ordinator/Supervisor into the next levels up, with the different components of competence and capability planned into certainly the better organisations and employers. This will include both technical activity skills and qualifications as well as ‘softer’ skills and attitudes.

Qualifications and training may be delivered in a variety of contexts – in-house with some employers, by specialist outdoors training providers, by higher or further education and by general industry training organisations in the case of generic skills areas such as management.