

Criteria/Standards

These are the eight areas of competence needed to become an accredited practitioner with APIOL. They should be read in conjunction with the APIOL Benchmarks.

This is the concise version of the criteria/standards. The full version with interpretive indicators is available for use during the APIOL application process.

1. Understanding the nature and potential of outdoor learning

This is about developing your view on the role of outdoor learning: 'Why' you do what you do

1. Have a reasonable breadth of knowledge about the way in which the field of outdoor learning has developed and an understanding of its current scope.
2. Be familiar with a range of beliefs, values and philosophies underpinning outdoor learning.
3. Understand how outdoor learning can be used to help individuals to develop.
4. Be aware of how outdoor learning can be of value to society.
5. Describe a clear personal philosophy of outdoor learning.

2. Promotion of responsible and sensitive use of the outdoor situation

This is about how you enthuse others with the wonder of the outdoors and engage with it sustainably

1. Describe the special contribution that the outdoors can make to individual learning and development.
2. Be able to share your enthusiasm for the outdoors with others.
3. Encourage participants to appreciate the wonder of the outdoor environment and their place within it.
4. Promote the importance of sustainable use of the environment.
5. Encourage participants to accept personal responsibility to act in an environmentally responsible manner.

3. Reflective practice and continuous professional development

This is about being committed to widening your skills and experience, deepening your reflection and applying this to what you do

1. Evaluate and reflect on your own practice.
2. Actively seek feedback and use it to develop your performance.
3. Participate regularly in activities to maintain and develop professional competence.
4. Actively apply the learning from your professional development in your work.

4. Values and professional integrity

This is about being aware of your own values and about how you work ethically and inclusively with others

1. Be aware of your own value system and the impact your actions have on others and be prepared to challenge prejudices and assumptions.
2. Work with others in a way that respects their values and help them to develop those values.
3. Evaluate your working practices in order to engender a sense of inclusiveness for people from a wide range of background and abilities.
4. Know and apply best practice in protection of participants from abuse.
5. Consistently uphold the Institute's Code of Professional Conduct, Statement of Purpose, Managing Diversity Policy and Environmental Sustainability Policy.

5. Design and management of learning experiences

This is about how you ensure that your programmes are appropriate, relevant and well thought through

1. Use a broad range of activities, in different environments, to achieve learning outcomes for a range of client groups with different needs.
2. Identify learning outcomes for experiences/programmes with a variety of types of aim, and tailor activities to achieve these.
3. Identify the needs of individual participants and know how to involve them in planning experiences if appropriate.
4. Plan, organise and manage the delivery of activities and learning experiences, taking into account legal, safety, access and environmental factors.
5. Resource and staff activities and learning experiences appropriately.
6. Plan and deliver a learning progression during a programme/experience.
7. Evaluate the appropriateness of learning experiences and adapt activities/experiences/programmes accordingly.

6. Learning process, facilitation skills and transfer of learning

This is about how you promote learning, encourage reflection and analysis and help participants see how they can use what they learn in future

1. Choose appropriate facilitation approaches to suit the age, ability and background of the group and to achieve different learning objectives.
2. Create an atmosphere which promotes learning and establishes effective relationships with and between participants.
3. Manage participants with a range of ability and/or motivation and deal with difficult or negative behaviour.
4. Estimate comfort zones and adventure thresholds and pitch level of intellectual and physical challenge appropriately.
5. Recognise and support individual as well as group needs and objectives.
6. Encourage participants to take responsibility for individual and group learning objectives and experiences.
7. Enable individuals and groups to reflect on their experiences and to review and apply what they have learned.
8. Help individuals and groups to transfer what they have learned to a context beyond the learning experience or programme.

7. Competent outdoor practice and risk management

This is about how you help groups and individuals to learn to manage risk and work towards safe independence in challenging environments

1. Provide evidence of competence and experience at an appropriate level in the activities and environments to be used.
2. Plan and equip for foreseeable problems or variations in weather and conditions.
3. Do competent 'on the hoof' risk/benefit assessment and management in challenging environments (as well as generic and site specific risk assessment).
4. Lead/manage a group to control their exposure to risk.
5. Continuously monitor and lead groups to challenge, but not exceed participants' adventure thresholds, levels of competence, fitness and motivation.
6. Share information with participants and encourage them to become competent in helping to manage their own safety.
7. Know how to take appropriate action in an emergency situation.
8. Promote, in actions and attitudes, a culture of: valuing individuals, risk/benefit management, and care of the environment.

8. Professional responsibilities – leadership, teamwork, client relations and involvement in the outdoor field

This is about how you contribute to your organisation, champion outdoor learning and help develop the outdoor field

1. Establish and maintain good working relationships with all team colleagues and managers.
2. Organise and motivate other staff to deliver the learning outcomes of a programme.
3. Work as a member of a team with professionals from outside your workplace (eg clients, group leaders).
4. Fulfil professional responsibilities required by others at work (ie pull your weight!).
5. Be involved in developing the outdoor field outside your work place.