



Participant Behavioural and Personal Competency Expectations

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Introduction and Background

Outward Bound programs aim to provide positive, personal development experiences for people – through adventuring in the outdoors. Outward Bound programs work within the societal frameworks of accepted behaviour, protecting the interests of all participants and the staff of Outward Bound. In order to protect the right of all participants to enjoy the program opportunities and benefit from the program without the undue disruption from others, this policy sets behavioural and personal competency expectations.

Outward Bound aims to provide inclusive opportunities for program participation, within the constraints of program schedules and our duty of care for all participants. The physical demands of Outward Bound programs are designed for participant success. They do not require peak athletic fitness and are not positioned as a survival course. A number of the adventure activities allow for ‘challenge by choice’, where participants can self-select participation and level of challenge (eg. High ropes course, abseiling). Other elements require participation (eg. Hiking or rafting a particular distance to the designated campsite). Programs can often be adapted to match the needs and capabilities of the group. However, they are not designed or staffed to accommodate special individual support needs or one-one supervision. Unless specifically described, planned and staffed, Outward Bound programs are not clinical behavioural interventions or therapeutic programs. People with an interest in a therapeutic or special needs-based program, are asked to enquire separately and discuss needs with an Outward Bound Client Manager.

Purpose and guiding principles

The purpose of this document is to outline the behavioural and personal competency expectations required for participants on an Outward Bound program, to safeguard the interests and safety of everyone. It is informed by the following guiding principles:

- Participants on Outward Bound programs have a right to enjoy the opportunities offered by the program, without undue disruption from others.
- Participants are unlikely to benefit or have a positive experience on an Outward Bound program, unless they are willing to meet behaviour standards towards others, are co-operative with program requirements, and have the personal management capabilities to self-manage living in an outdoor context.
- Outward Bound staff have a right to be safe and respected in their workplace.

Behavioural and Personal Competency Expectations

There are three elements to the behavioural and personal competency expectations:

1. Abusive or overtly disrespectful behaviour

Physical or verbally abusive behaviours will not be tolerated. This includes swearing, yelling or displaying threatening behaviours towards other people.

Overtly disrespectful behaviours towards other people are not acceptable. This includes bullying, intentional damage to other people's property, and intolerant or insulting comments in relation to race, sexuality, faith or personal attributes.

2. Compliant participation

Participants are expected to be co-operative and to partake in the fundamental elements of the program, without deliberately disrupting group activities or the progress of the program. This includes following the instruction of Group Leaders, participating responsibly in group living activities, and not being disruptive in a way that prevents others from participating or enjoying the program of activities. Malicious disregard of safety guidelines will not be tolerated.

3. Personal management competencies

Personal management competencies must be at an adequate level to self-manage living skills in an outdoor camping environment. This includes:

- Capacity to self-manage personal hygiene
- Age-appropriate understanding and management of sexual behaviours
- Capacity to manage personal clothing and equipment
- Adequate fine and gross motor skills to participate in outdoor activities
- Capacity to self-manage mental health issues such that they do not present a safety threat to themselves or others

Consequences of transgression

In non-trivial instances where behavioural and personal competency expectations are not met, Outward Bound will follow the procedures set out in our 'Standard Operating Procedures'. This includes the following three step procedure:

First incidence: The Group Leader will discuss the incident with the participant explaining the breach and re-asserting required expectations. A verbal contract will be established with the participant, undertaking an agreement to comply with expectations. This will include an articulation of the consequences should a second incidence arise.

Note: at this stage the second group leader is involved in the discussion.

Second incidence: The Program Co-ordinator and Group Leader will discuss the incident with the participant to understand circumstances and re-iterate requirements. The participant may be temporarily withdrawn from the program. Parents or guardians will be notified of the breach, and of the consequences and obligations should a third incidence occur. A written contract will be developed with the participant, agreeing to comply with the expectations and articulating the consequences of a third incidence.

Third incidence: The third incidence will involve the permanent removal of the participant from the program, with no refund for any remaining portion of the program. Parents or guardians will be notified and required to collect or make appropriate travel arrangements for the participant to leave Outward Bound. If parents or guardians have not responded to Outward Bound contact within 3 hours or have not made appropriate arrangement for collection or safe transportation within a reasonable period of time (~12 hours), it will be necessary for Outward Bound to contact the police or department of human services to make alternative arrangements to safely transfer duty of care.

Note: Where the breach of personal competencies relates to an undeclared special need and cannot be rectified through discussion and agreement, it may be appropriate to expedite this process.