



National
Guidance

oeapng.info

Joint Visits and Partnership Working

Sometimes different employers or establishments work together to organise outdoor learning opportunities or offsite visits for participants from more than one establishment. These can have many advantages, such as:

- Participants and staff from different establishments, and possibly from different backgrounds, get to know each other and learn from each other;
- Staff from different establishments share resources, experience and expertise, and provide opportunities that would not otherwise be available;
- Economies of scale are possible, making more efficient use of resources and reducing the cost per participant.

For example: two primary schools organise a joint residential visit, with teachers from both schools accompanying the group and sharing the responsibilities of leadership and supervision. The schools agree which of these teachers is the Visit Leader.

Alternatively, sometimes an establishment works in partnership with a provider, rather than having a transactional relationship where the establishment simply engages the provider to provide a service. For example, a school might enter into a long-term arrangement with a specialist provider, to organise a programme of activities and visits where teachers lead some activities and provider staff lead other activities, pooling their individual expertise. Again, this can have many advantages, including:

- The provider brings specialist resources and expertise which the establishment does not otherwise have;
- The provider trains establishment staff;
- Establishment staff can use their own expertise, rather than hand over totally to the provider and thus feel disempowered.

For example: a secondary school engages a local Duke of Edinburgh's Award Approved Activity Provider to support learners in training for and carrying out expeditions. Teachers from the school accompany the groups throughout the programme, providing welfare support and developing their skills and experience, eventually gaining relevant leadership qualifications.

If working with an external provider, see OEAP National Guidance documents [4.4g "Selecting External Providers and Facilities"](#) and [4.4h "Using External Providers"](#).

Whether working with another establishment or with a provider, establishments should check whether their insurance covers the planned arrangements – see OEAP National Guidance document [4.4c "Insurance"](#).

Sometimes an establishment may act as a provider. For example, a school might organise a ski trip and offer other schools the opportunity to take part. In this case, or if in doubt, any establishment wanting to take up the opportunity should consider the guidance for using external providers alongside the following advice for working with another establishment.

If an establishment plans to offer learners who are not on its roll the opportunity to participate in a visit, without the involvement of the learners' own establishment(s), see OEAP National Guidance document [4.4g "Visits with External Participants"](#).

Working with Another Establishment

When working in partnership with another organisation, it is vital to have a shared vision and ethos, with clearly agreed aims for the joint activities. It is also important to have a clear understanding of who is responsible for what, especially the risk management of activities. There should be a written agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding or a contract, which sets out the aims and nature of the provision and details of what the different parties are responsible for, how decisions are made and how concerns are addressed.

Employers are legally responsible for the health, safety and welfare of those affected by their activities, including when engaging an external provider to deliver those activities: see OEAP National Guidance document [3.2a "Underpinning Legal Framework and Duty of Care"](#). This responsibility also applies when working in partnership with another employer or provider, and care should be taken to ensure that nothing 'falls down the cracks' between the organisations. The same considerations apply when establishments from the same employer work together.

One way of working is to assign the responsibility of assessing the risks of each joint activity to a particular partner, usually the partner with the most expertise in that activity, and for the results of the risk assessment to be shared with the other partners for review and agreement. Some online visit management systems provide the facility for doing this between establishments from the same employer.

In order to effectively assess and manage risks, and to make practical arrangements, it may be necessary to share personal information about participants and staff, including behavioural and medical details. This should be done sensitively and confidentially, and in accordance with data protection legislation – see OEAP National Guidance document [4.4j "Participant Information and Data Protection"](#).

When staff from different organisations are involved in leading visits and activities, it must be clear at any time who is the current Visit Leader and/or Activity Leader, with clear handover when these change. See OEAP National Guidance document [3.4k "Visit or Activity Leader"](#).

Any establishment providing 'in scope' adventure activities for participants who are not on their own roll, for payment, is legally required to have an Adventure Activities Licence. See OEAP National Guidance document [3.2f "Adventure Activity Licensing"](#).

Examples of Partnership Working

The following OEAP National Guidance documents give further advice about specific examples of partnership working:

- [7.1c "Collaborative Provision"](#) about collaborative curriculum provision between establishments;
- [7.1y "Using Armed Services Providers"](#) about Combined Cadet Force (CCF) contingents in schools and colleges.

