Somerset Council

Risk assessment form (H&S)

Name of assessor(s)	Callum McMillan	Group / Establishment:	SSE Outdoors
Date	January 2026		

What is the workplace / activity:	How was the assessment done?	Next review date:
		January 2027
The Quantock Hills is an area of outstanding natural beauty and can be explored with many groups. The routes used vary depending on if the walk is to last a few hours, half a day or a whole day. Walks can include dam building and shelter or den building. Most routes start and finish from Kilve Court although Holford Layby and Dead Woman's Ditch and NCS Campsite can also be used as a starting point for longer walks. Walks can be an evening activity so can take place during dusk or nighttime conditions. N.B – Risk assessment also covers remote supervision of groups within the above-described area.	Onsite, site visit and desktop exercise using map.	**Is the assessment 'generic' or specific to the situation?**

Who could be harmed, and how?	What is already being done to control the risks?	*Risk Rating Severity x Likelihood			What further action is recommended to reduce risks further?	Action by whom?	Date action due	Date action done	Residual Risk Rating Severity x Likelihood		
		S	**L**	**S x L**					**S**	**L**	**S x L**
All participants – slips, trips and falls	• Clear session brief/s about safe movement across terrain at start of session and when encountering different / difficult terrain e.g. streams, steep ground etc. • Suitable footwear to be worn for the terrain and conditions. Footwear must be closed toed. • Close monitoring of participants by instructor • Groups staff briefed to support instructor e.g. be at the back of group • made aware of conditions underfoot at regular intervals.	2	4	8	Route selection based upon ability of group and age. Night walks to be on well-defined paths and group to be	Lead instructor	Continuous				
All participants – Extreme weather.	• Check weather prior to start of session/day • Cease activity if lightning is within 2 miles (1 mile per second from thunder to lightning)	2	3	5							

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		S	L	S x L					S	L	S x L
	• Alternative activity identified if winds are high. (Yellow warning or higher) • Sun block, water and shade to be factored during hotter months to reduce heat stroke. • Hats, gloves and coats to factored during cold months to reduce hyperthermia.										
All participants – immersion in cold water / drowning	• Clear session brief/s about safe movement in streams • Safe area to be identified by instructor and shared with all participants with clear boundaries • Paddling in streams only in suitable conditions • Close monitoring of participants by instructor and regular guidance provided • Weather forecast to be checked for that day	5	1	5							

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All participants –Walking on roads.	• Clear session brief/s about walking on roads / lanes • Walk on right hand side • Only 2 participants abreast • Alert group of oncoming traffic • Change to single file on right hand side and stop to allow passing traffic to get by • Adult at front and rear of group to wear high visibility clothing and at night / in low light to carry a torch • Road crossings to be managed by instructor with support of group staff • Group to cross as one and additional adults to act as marshals	5	1	5							
All participants – Dehydration	• If the walk is over 2 hours long instructor must carry liquids or ensure group are carrying enough liquids	5	1	5							

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	• Participants encouraged to carry own water bottle / drink • Regular stops to be made and participants encouraged to drink • Weather forecast to be checked and group briefed accordingly										
All participants – Damage to farmland and the environment	• Countryside code to be explained to participants • Footpaths to be always followed • Gates to be left as they were found • Noise levels to be kept to a minimum	1	3	3							
All participants – Contamination	• All participants to be briefed not to pick up faecal matter / fungi • All participants to wash hands at the end of the session	3	2	6							

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	• Monitoring of participants who have encountered faecal matter / fungi or ingested stream water										
All participants – Poor behaviour	• Clear safety brief at beginning of session with expectations made clear to participants • Constant monitoring and reminding of group by instructor • Brief group staff on their role in supporting with managing behaviour • Reiteration of rules from safety briefing • Early intervention by instructor in any poor behaviour • Instructor to make themselves aware of groups needs prior to session in liaison with staff, using information in instructor office and notes in diary.	4	2	8							

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All participants – Environmental factors e.g. flooding, fallen trees, adverse weather etc.	• Clear brief to be influenced by weather forecast and route choice • Weather forecast to be checked • Consider potential route changes based on this information	3	1	3	• Spare kit appropriate to weather conditions to be prepared and travel with group • Travelling is not permitted in snowy/icy conditions. • Offsite excursions to be limited in winds over 40mph. • No traveling permitted in red weather warnings.	Group lead					
All participants – Contact with wild animals / grazing stock	• Countryside code to be explained to participants • Footpaths to be followed where possible • Gates to be left as they were found • Noise levels to be kept to a minimum – brief participants	3	2	6							

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	of quiet passage past animals • Plot appropriate diversions of livestock										
All participants – Getting lost / going with an unknown person	• Instructor to always maintain close control of group and ensure they can see the back of the group • Instructors should work with group staff to employ a 'check check' system to regular headcounts • Clear safety briefing emphasising the importance of staying together as a group • Brief group staff to assist with keeping the group together • Include boundaries for any locations where the group stops, dam builds, shelter builds and monitor them • Torches to be carried in low light and on night walks	5	1	5							

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	• Offsite information to be completed on board in instructor office including route description, contact number and eta • Offsite walking bag to be carried containing map and compass as well as a shelter and grid references and contact details for the centre / duty mobile										
Remote Supervision – Supervising groups remotely	• Instructor to ensure any participants being remotely supervised have the necessary knowledge, skills and equipment to be 'self-sufficient' in the area being supervised • If the instructor has not had some form of contact/visual check of the group in 2 hours then they should notify the 'designated emergency contact', attempt to contact the group and conduct a localised search with	5	1	5							

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	regards to the last known location and the groups proposed route. If after 4 hours there has still not been any contact with the group, then the emergency services should be notified. • The location of supervision and group number/size should be within the comfort zone of the instructor supervising • Instructor to brief groups on an 'emergency plan' in the event of an emergency • Groups will be expected to designate an 'emergency phone' per team where applicable and encourage the group not to use the phone unless needed										

* *Please refer to the risk rating matrix below. Further guidance on how to calculate a risk rating from the matrix is on the Risk Assessment policy HS 004.*

Please now pass this assessment to your manager for approval					
Name of assessor's manager:	**Luke Hoather**	**Date:**	**14/1/26**	**Manager's comments**	
Signature:	Lhoather				

Risk Matrix

Risk Rating				
Very High (VH) 15-25	High (H) 10-12	Medium (M) 5-9		Low (L) 1-4

Likelihood Descriptor		Consequence Descriptor		Consequence (Impact/Severity of Injury)				
				1. Insignificant	2. Minor	3. Moderate	4. Major	5. Catastrophic
				• Near Miss. • No treatment required.	• First-Aid treatment (e.g. minor cuts, bruises, bumps)	• Medical treatment • Lost time of >3 working days.	• Serious injury/ medical treatment. • Hospitalisation. • Lost time (RIDDOR)	• Loss of life. • Permanent disability.
Likelihood (Probability/Chance)	Very likely. Event is expected to occur in most circumstances: More than 95% chance of occurring.	5.	Almost Certain	M-5	H-10	VH-15	VH-20	VH-25
	There is a strong possibility the event will occur. Between 65% - 95% chance of occurring.	4.	Likely	L-4	M-8	H-12	VH-16	VH-20
	The event has occurred before or could again. Between 35% - 65% chance of occurring.	3.	Possible	L-3	M-6	M-9	H-12	VH-15
	The event is not expected to occur but could under specific circumstances. Between 5% - 35% chance of occurring.	2.	Unlikely	L-2	L-4	M-6	M-8	H-10
	The event has not occurred before, but it may occur in exceptional circumstances. < 5% chance of occurring.	1.	Rare	L-1	L-2	L-3	L-4	M-5