

Badged and ready for adventure

Catherine Sturrock from the Outward Bound Trust takes us through why they decided to get a LOtC Quality Badge

The Outward Bound Trust has been active for over 65 years now and is a specialist educational charity that offers residential outdoor learning courses for young people, in some of the UK's most extraordinary and wild environments.

Since the 1940s, we have been giving young people life changing experiences through real adventures in the natural environment. We are proud of the reputation we have built over the years, and feel that being awarded the Quality Badge gives further recognition of the quality and credibility synonymous with our name.

Why did the Trust apply for the Adventurous Activities Quality Badge?

We believe that gaining the LOtC Adventurous Activities Quality Badge for all of our residential centres has helped to reinforce our reputation as the UK's leading provider of bursary-assisted outdoor learning.



Our residential courses use a combination of activities as a means of achieving a wide range of learning objectives, with very tangible learning outcomes. Each course is designed to complement the key objectives set out in the National Curriculum and Curriculum for Excellence.

When schools select an outdoor provider it's important for them to see clearly the standards that each provider operates at. We take real pride in the high quality of our residential courses and the Quality Badge gives a clear indication of this to the people responsible for planning adventurous residentials - it also serves to reassure potential clients that they are in very experienced hands. The badge is a national benchmark for the provision of educational visits, recognising organisations that are delivering high quality teaching and learning experiences and managing risk effectively. We hope that the Quality Badge will encourage more schools and colleges to contact The Trust to explore how we can support their wider curriculum requirements.

How did the Trust achieve the Quality Badge?

As we provide educational experiences in the adventurous activities sector, we applied for the Quality Badge through 'Route 2' which is for organisations whose activities require a degree of technical knowledge and experience that are beyond the lay person. We were required to demonstrate that:

- Learning Outside the Classroom is understood and valued
- Processes are in place to establish and maintain an effective partnership with schools and other groups of young learners
- Structures are in place to support and enable effective learning.

As an adventurous activities provider, we were also assessed by the Adventurous Activities Industry Advisory Committee (AAIAC), to ensure that we met a stringent set of quality indicators and have adequate safety management systems in place.

We applied through the Quality Badge website, www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk where we found guidance and good practice exemplars to support us through the process.

We are always keen to demonstrate how The Outward Bound Trust delivers meaningful learning through our three unique assets - our people, our process and our places.

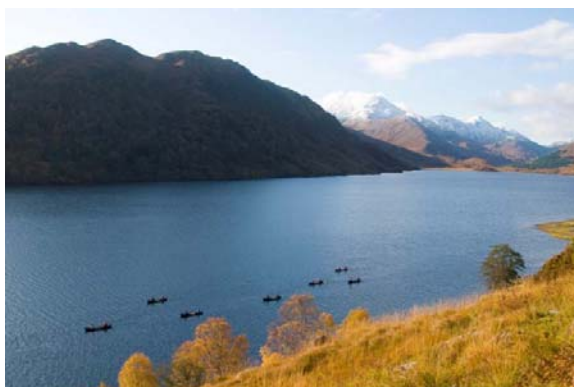
- **People.** When they visited our four residential centres, the LOTC inspectors observed skilled and experienced outdoor learning professionals working with groups of young people on courses that targeted specific learning outcomes. The activities were designed to meet a range of objectives, all of which were defined and agreed with the respective school or college before the start of the course, and adapted throughout the course in line with the group's and individuals' needs and abilities.
- **Process.** The inspectors were given an insight into the considerable infrastructure that sits behind an Outward Bound® course - management support, training and development, formal client feedback, and a well established

mechanism for feedback that is used to continuously improve clients' and participants' experience of working with the Trust.

- Places. Visiting our four residential centres in Snowdonia, Ullswater and Howtown in the Lake District, and Loch Eil in the Scottish Highlands, the inspectors were able to witness first hand that The Outward Bound Trust delivers its courses in some of the most beautiful and inspirational locations in the UK.

We are delighted to have received the LOTC Quality Badge for adventurous activities.

We hope that this persuades potential clients to consider a new option when choosing outdoor providers for learning outside the classroom, and that it plays an important role in helping to move outdoor learning higher up the education agenda.



To find out more about how we could help your school and students, please visit www.outwardbound.org.uk, or email enquiries@outwardbound.org.uk. We can also be contacted by telephone on **01931 740000**.

For information on the learning outside the classroom Quality Badge visit www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk