

**35.** School EOTC programmes should be designed to meet the educational needs of all students. Programmes should aim to include, rather than exclude, students with special needs whether physical, educational or related to culture. More information on inclusive EOTC is available at [www.safeoutside.org](http://www.safeoutside.org) They should also meet the requirements of school EOTC policy, which may be in the school charter or in a supporting document to an overall NAG 1 policy statement. Sample EOTC policy statements are included in *Anywhere Everywhere*, Ministry of Education, 1992 available on: [www.tki.org.nz/e/community/eotc/resources](http://www.tki.org.nz/e/community/eotc/resources)

**36.** Key principles of a quality EOTC programme include:

- appropriate educational objectives;
- appropriate learning and teaching approaches;
- meeting student needs;
- effective programme sequencing; and
- effective safety management.

### ▶ **Educational objectives**

**37.** There must be sound educational reasons for taking students outside the classroom to learn. For example, it is not appropriate to take students on an EOTC learning experience because it has always been undertaken. Curriculum links must be made and expected learning outcomes for each curriculum area clearly identified. For example, an EOTC experience is an ideal opportunity to integrate curriculum areas and teach thematically. So an EOTC experience may involve learning outcomes for science, maths and art. EOTC is also an excellent medium for addressing essential skills in the New Zealand curriculum framework.

### ▶ **Teaching and learning approaches**

**38.** EOTC allows for a broad range of teaching approaches. One worthwhile approach is the experiential education process.<sup>14</sup> This student-centred approach involves hands-on experience

and active reflection that leads to critical thinking and re-orientation to new ideas. Students then have the opportunity to try out their new understandings, ideas and behaviours to create deeper understanding.

**39.** Experiential learning<sup>15</sup> is an excellent way of engaging students in the EOTC safety process. As well as learning the intended curriculum outcomes, the EOTC experience becomes a medium for students to learn about and demonstrate safety skills. Students should be engaged in the planning, experiencing and evaluation stages of an EOTC experience to gain full benefit from the learning opportunities available.

### ▶ **Student needs**

**40.** Once student needs have been assessed, educational objectives can be established and learning and teaching strategies decided. Some factors to consider when planning a programme to meet student needs include:

- age and size (for example, small hands on large paddle);
- developmental readiness (physical, social, mental and emotional);
- previous experience in the environment and/or activity;
- options for participation so the programme is as inclusive as possible;
- culture and ethnicity;
- maturity;
- educational, medical, health, language and behavioural needs;
- rural/urban lifestyles; and
- learning level (1-8).

<sup>14</sup> For further reading, see Henton, M. (1996). *Adventure in the classroom*. Dubuque; Kendall/Hunt. Warren, K. Sakofs, M. Hunt, J.S. (Eds). (1995). *The theory of experiential education*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Dubuque; Kendall/Hunt.

<sup>15</sup> See Appendix II, EOTC – Related terms.

41. Assessing student needs helps ensure their physical and emotional safety which includes cultural safety. To ensure the cultural safety of students, teachers need to check out their cultural needs. Following are some examples of things to consider:

- issues such as head touching;
- using a site that is tapu;<sup>16</sup>
- swimming for Māori, Pasifika and Somali girls;
- sleeping arrangements for overnight events;
- obtaining consent and/or information from local iwi; and
- observing any site significance for particular cultural groups.

## ▶ Sequencing

42. The concept of sequencing is key to effective educational programming and safety management alike. In EOTC the two are inextricably linked. In order to learn new knowledge, skills and attitudes, small steps must be sequenced towards the end goal. Just as mathematics skills are best learned progressively, outdoor skills should also be taught in a sequential manner.

43. Sequencing is important across a school's EOTC programme as well as within each EOTC event and activity.

### (i) Across an EOTC programme

44. When a school plans its EOTC programme, it should consider if there is a clear and appropriate sequence from junior through to senior programmes and from the beginning to the end of the year. This may involve liaison with other schools in the area that students are likely to progress to or from. For example:

- do EOTC experiences at each level build on the knowledge, skills and attitudes developed in previous year/s;
- do EOTC experiences early in the year form a foundation for education programmes over the rest of the year; and
- do EOTC experiences at the end of the year build on and extend the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained throughout the year?

45. In addition, teachers should ask themselves if planned experiences are:

- age and learning-level appropriate;
- repeated in any other year;
- going to offer challenge within students' limits; or
- going to put students out of their depth and create negative attitudes.

46. It is not essential to enter high-risk environments or to travel long distances from the school to achieve educational objectives through EOTC. Much can be achieved by taking advantage of facilities and environments in and near the school's locality. As a general guide, an EOTC programme could be sequenced so that year groups focus on events in the following types of environment. Different school charters may vary from this guide.

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Years 1-4   | Exploring the local community within walking distance from the school or accessible by local car, bus or train ride.                                                                     |
| Years 5-6   | In addition to the above, exploring rural or city environments and possibly involving staying overnight.                                                                                 |
| Years 7-8   | In addition to the above, exploring bush and water environments within a few hours walk from a road end or accessible by vehicle.                                                        |
| Years 9-10  | In addition to the above, exploring other towns and cities in New Zealand, back-country areas that take a day or more to get to, using marked tracks and involving staying a few nights. |
| Years 11-13 | In addition to the above, possibly involving more remote back-country environments or overseas visits.                                                                                   |

47. To plan and sequence an effective and safe EOTC learning experience away from the school grounds, teachers should pre-visit the site. This is critical to increasing a teacher's knowledge of the general lie of the land, the educational potential for using the site and the "what ifs". The board of trustees has a responsibility to

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix I, Glossary.

ensure time and resources are available for teachers to do this.

### **(ii) Within an EOTC event**

**48.** The classic school camp-type event is often composed of a variety of rostered activities. It is desirable to take account of how activities are sequenced for each group of students, so one group does not end up out of their depth with the most challenging activity on the first day. This can lead to some students losing confidence early and being unwilling to try further activities. It could also lead to injury or accident.

**49.** Activities should be sequenced to build student confidence and skills over the duration of an EOTC learning experience. Adventure-based learning<sup>17</sup> activities that build trust and co-operation early on are well-suited to this. These can be followed by activities where trust and cooperation are needed, thereby giving students skills to keep themselves and others safe. Finally, an experience can be programmed for students where they can challenge themselves within a supportive peer environment. This may be an individual challenge such as a blindfold walk or rock climb, or group challenge such as a problem-solving initiative or day hike. Often well-sequenced learning experiences will be safer, with students feeling more confident to exceed their previously perceived limits.

**50.** Another important strategy is to try and keep students with the same supervisor/s for the whole EOTC learning experience. This has to be balanced with the availability of specialist instructor/teachers in some programmes. The advantage is that a teacher/instructor is more able to facilitate progressive group and individual development and thus, better able to meet student needs. If the supervisor is involved in the planning, running and evaluation of the EOTC experience as well, potential for meeting educational and safety outcomes can be increased.

### **(iii) Within an EOTC activity**

**51.** Sequencing a specific EOTC activity enables students to build confidence and skills together. This can make learning fun while giving students the ability to keep themselves safe. For example, learning how to get in and out of a kayak on dry land, practising wet exits with a buddy in a swimming pool, and learning and practising

various paddle strokes on flat water can provide a well-sequenced introduction to venturing onto grade one moving water. However, if observation and professional judgement suggest that the planned sequence is not appropriate for a group, the teacher or instructor must be prepared to take a detour. By exercising good judgement, and altering the planned sequence to meet student needs, a disaster may be avoided.

**52.** In summary, a well-sequenced EOTC programme can ensure students do not find themselves out of their depth, without the knowledge, skills, or attitude to cope in that environment.

## **Effective safety management**

**53.** When the key principles of:

- appropriate educational objectives;
- appropriate teaching and learning approaches;
- meeting student needs; and
- effective programme sequencing;

are in place in an EOTC programme, then the foundations for safety are laid. These form the bedrock of a programme's safety management system. Involving students is also fundamental to the safety management process.

**54.** Section 4 and Appendix V cover safety management systems for EOTC, in detail. A five-stage process for safety management is suggested in Section 4, and sample forms are provided to assist with this process in Appendix V.

**55.** In Section 4, Figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 show examples of how to use the systems and resources in these sections for EOTC programme planning and safety management.

<sup>17</sup> See Appendix II, EOTC – Related terms.