

# 2025 ASSESSMENT REPORT

## OXP315118 OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP

### Section A – Leadership Theory

#### Question 1

**You are leading the final bushwalk for your Outdoor Leadership class with eight participants. The group has decided to extend their skills on a 3-day walk along a remote track. Being the final walk of the year, the class has bonded well and generally has good connections with each other.**

**Halfway through day two the condition of the track deteriorates until it becomes thick and overgrown, with no clear track to follow. Participants are becoming frustrated and are starting to lose confidence in you as their leader. It is getting late and you are still hours from camp.**

**In a carefully constructed extended response (essay form), apply two (2) recognised leadership theories to the scenario provided. In your response, show how these leadership theories may result in different outcomes, highlighting any similarities or differences.**

#### Response Requirements for Criterion 2

- This question requires students to discuss two (2) recognised leadership theories.
- Ideally, these theories will be contrasting to acknowledge the notion that different leadership theories can result in different outcomes when applied to a similar scenario.
- Students are required to provide a clear, concise and detailed description of each of the chosen theories.
- Students are required to apply both their chosen leadership theories to the supplied scenario, demonstrating how each leadership theory aligns with the scenario.
- Students can use diagrams to articulate depth of knowledge and understanding, but these must be directly referred to within the body of the essay.
- Students are not required to "resolve" the scenario but rather discuss how their chosen leadership theories would influence the potential outcomes of the given scenario.
- Students must provide a comparison of the two theories; ideally, addressing the similarities and differences of each theory when applied to the scenario.

#### Response Requirements for Criterion 8

To be successful in Criterion 8 students need to organise information in a logical sequence in response to the question. Good essay writing structure is required, including strong and clear introductions that address the question, responses must be in logically sequenced paragraphs, include a wide range of specialised terminology and summarise the content with a conclusion.

## Assessment Strategies

### Marker is looking for:

- **Correct definition** of two valid leadership theories studied in the course.
- **Clear explanation** of how each theory would influence decisions in the scenario (e.g., route choice, managing group frustration, communication).
- **Specific examples** of leader behaviour or decision-making aligned to each theory.
- **Depth of application**, not just surface-level statements.
- **Comparison** between how the two theories would result in different outcomes (or similar ones).
- **Discussion of effectiveness**: Which leadership style works better in this context and why?
- **Impact on the group**: How does each theory affect team confidence, cohesion, progress, or trust in the leader?
- **Reflection**: Shows understanding that leadership choices in the outdoors have real consequences (e.g., safety, group morale, fatigue).
- **Similarities and differences**: What are the similarities and differences between the two leadership theories and the resulting outcomes.

### Criterion 2 Elements 1 & 2

#### Strong Responses:

- Accurately defines and applies two relevant leadership theories to the scenario, clearly linking theoretical concepts to specific aspects of the situation (e.g., morale decline, navigation difficulty, group safety).
- Reflects critically on how each style would affect group morale, safety and goal achievement, demonstrating an understanding of how theory influences decision-making and group dynamics in real time.

#### Mid-Level Responses:

- Defines and applies two appropriate leadership theories with mostly clear connections to the scenario. Shows understanding of how the theories might influence leader actions and group outcomes, with some practical insight.
- Evaluates the effectiveness of the two leadership approaches in a way that is mostly clear and relevant to the scenario. Comparison shows some depth and consideration of group and leader outcomes.

#### Less-Successful Responses:

- Applies leadership theories but with limited or unclear connection to the scenario.
- May confuse elements of theory or oversimplify their relevance to the situation.
- Some evaluation present but may be uneven, general, or lack clarity. Limited comparison between theories or unclear reflections on outcomes

## Criterion 8 Elements 1, 2, 4 & 5

### Marker is looking for:

- **Essay structure:** Does the student use paragraphs logically? Is there an introduction, explanation of theories, application to scenario, comparison and a conclusion?
- **Terminology:** Are terms like situational leadership, transformational, directive, delegative, group cohesion, or decision-making used accurately?
- **Spelling and grammar:** Are sentences well-constructed? Are there consistent issues with punctuation, capitalisation or word usage?
- **Tone and clarity:** Is the response formal and appropriate for a senior secondary assessment? Is the argument or explanation easy to follow?

### Strong responses:

- Expresses ideas fluently and logically in a clear essay structure (introduction, body, conclusion). Uses appropriate leadership terminology accurately and confidently.
- Writing is coherent, concise and largely free of spelling and grammar errors. Demonstrates control over tone and style appropriate to a formal response.

### Mid-Level Responses:

- Ideas are clearly communicated in an organised format. Most terminology is used correctly.
- Some minor spelling or grammatical errors may be present but do not impede meaning. Writing is mostly clear and appropriate to task.

### Less Successful Responses:

- Writing has a basic structure, though organisation of ideas may be inconsistent.
- Leadership terminology is attempted but may be limited or used inaccurately at times. Frequent errors in spelling/grammar or awkward phrasing may affect clarity.

### Final feedback for students:

- It is recommended that the students choose two leadership theories which they can describe and apply to the situation in detail and allow for an informed comparison.
- It is good to address the exam question of how implementing different leadership theories can lead to different outcomes; however, students aren't recommended to elaborate in detail on how they specifically 'solve' the scenario. For example, discussing their navigational and camping techniques.
- Ensure a solid essay structure of an introduction, topic paragraphs addressing the question i.e. analysis of leadership theories and a conclusion.
- Don't need to re-write the scenario in the introduction.
- Use appropriate and specialised Outdoor Leadership terminology.

## Section B – Leadership Skills

### Question 2

**Describe the importance of goal setting in outdoor education. How would a leader help a group and individuals set effective goals for an outdoor activity?**

#### Assessment Strategy

Key Information	Summary	Marks
Purpose	Description of the importance and/or purpose of goal setting	0-2 marks
Support	Discussion on how goal setting supports personal development	0-2 marks
Process	Discussion on processes or strategies that a leader can employ to assist participants in their goal setting	0-2 marks
Consideration	Discussion on the difference between individual vs group goals	0-2 marks
Leader	Reference to the leader's role in the process of goal setting	0-2 marks

#### Strong Responses:

- A strong response would clearly explain why goal setting is a critical component of Outdoor Education, linking both learning outcomes, personal development and group performance.
- In describing how a leader assists the group/individual in setting effective goals, high quality responses would demonstrate knowledge of established goal-setting frameworks such as SMART or CLEAR goals.
- Finally, they may include discussion around the leader reviewing and adjusting the goals throughout an activity to support ongoing learning.

#### Less Successful Responses:

- Less successful responses would only provide general explanation of goal setting, often highlighting that it was important, but not going into detail as to why it is important.
- Less successful responses were often vague in their discussion on how a leader could assist in the development of goals and provided minimal links to goal-setting frameworks.

## Question 3

You are leading a group of beginner students on a 3-day sea-kayaking expedition. On the second day, the group encounters strong winds, one participant capsizes, and others begin to lose confidence in their own abilities. List one (1) hard skill, one (1) soft skill and one (1) metaskill that an outdoor leader would need to effectively manage this situation. For each of these skills, explain how it could be applied to this scenario.

### Assessment Strategy

Key Information	Summary	Marks
Identification	One (1) mark was granted for the candidate's ability to identify a soft, hard and metaskill.	0-3 marks
Application	Two (2) marks were assigned to the candidate's discussion on each identified skill. Candidates were required to explain how each of their skills could be applied explicitly to the provided scenario.	0-6 marks
Bonus	One (1) point was assigned for a students ability to define soft, hard and metaskills correctly within their response.	0-1 marks

#### Strong Responses:

A strong response would clearly identify one appropriate hard, soft and meta skill relevant to managing a challenging sea-kayaking situation. These responses accurately defined each of the skills – hard (technical), soft (interpersonal), meta (transferable skills – problem solving, decision making etc.). Strong responses integrated accurate definitions, relevant examples and clear links between each skill and its practical application to the scenario.

#### Less Successful Responses:

A less successful responses would typically show limited understanding of the difference between hard, soft and meta skills or incorrectly categorise the skills that they have identified. Less successful responses often were unclear in their definitions and scenario-specific application of their identified skills.

## Question 4

Explain the importance of risk management in outdoor education. Identify one (1) strategy you could use to manage risk during an outdoor activity. Explain how this strategy reduces the likelihood or severity of potential incidents and contributes to group safety.

### Assessment Strategy

Key Information	Summary	Marks
Importance	2 marks for explaining the importance of risk management.	0-2 marks
Identification	1 mark for identifying a risk management strategy.	0-1 marks
Reduction of Risk	2 marks for an explanation of how the strategy can manage risk.	0-2 marks
Application to Outdoor Activity	1 mark for explicitly applying that strategy to being used during an outdoor activity.	0-1 marks
Risk Rating	2 marks to explain how the strategy reduces the likelihood or severity of potential incidents.	0-2 marks
Group Safety	2 marks for explaining how the strategy contributes to group safety.	0-2 marks

#### Strong Responses:

- A strong response would demonstrate a clear and accurate understanding of why risk management is essential to outdoor education. Highlighting student safety, positive learning and reduction of serious incidents.
- When identifying a strategy, strong responses would discuss risk assessments, hazard identification, risk ratings, minimisation strategies and safety briefings as different mechanisms for reducing risks.
- These responses would then apply a strategy directly to an outdoor context to demonstrate their understanding of how risk assessments are applied and contribute to group safety.

#### Less Successful Responses:

- Less successful responses provided limited explanation of the importance of risk management – often only mentioning that it assists with safety. These responses often did not go into detail about a strategy to identify and reduce the risk of an activity.
- Overall, less successful responses lacked clear explanation and practical application of risk management to an outdoor activity, demonstrating a limited understanding of risk management principles.

## Question 5

**Define equity in the context of outdoor education. Describe an example of an equity-related issue that may arise in an outdoor experience, and explain how you, as the leader, would address this issue to ensure an inclusive and supportive experience.**

### Assessment Strategy

Key Information	Summary	Marks
Importance	2 marks for a definition of equity.	0-2 marks
Identification	3 marks for describing an equity-related issue that may arise in an outdoor experience.	0-3 marks
Reduction of Risk	5 marks for explaining how the leader can address the issue to ensure an inclusive and supportive experience (only able to achieve 5 marks for this section if they discuss both inclusive and supportive experience).	0-5 marks

#### Strong Response:

A candidate who provided a strong response clearly defined equity in outdoor education, such as fair access, support, adjustments and leadership opportunities, based on personal circumstances rather than just treating everyone the same. Strong responses were able to describe relevant equity issues relating to the stimulus questions and provide specific/practical strategies to address the identified issue to ensure an inclusive and safe environment is provided for their participants.

#### Less Successful Responses:

Candidates who achieved lower ratings often confused equality with equity and/or provided a very vague definition in relation to outdoor education. Their examples of equity-related issues were brief or poorly linked to an outdoor setting. Leadership strategies were generalised and lacked explanation on how they could be implemented and their impact on developing an inclusive environment.

#### Areas for improvement:

- Encouraging students to explicitly apply all their answers to outdoor experiences to provide more context to their answers.
- Encouraging students to carefully read the questions and make sure they answer each different part of the question.

## Section C – Group Management

### Question 6:

**Outdoor Leaders reflect on Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs as they plan and deliver an outdoor experience**

**How might an outdoor leaders apply Maslow’s hierarchy of needs at the start of a 3-day bushwalk**

#### Assessment Strategy

Key Information	Summary	Marks
Knowledge of Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs	Candidate identifies each of the stages of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. For each stage that they correctly identify through their response, they are awarded ½ a mark.	0-2.5 marks
Definition of stages of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs	Candidate defines each of the stages of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. For each stage that they correctly discuss/define through their response, they are awarded ½ a mark.	0-2.5 marks
Application of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs to the bushwalking stimulus	Candidates need to demonstrate that lower needs need to be met first and how these needs can be managed by an outdoor leader. Depth of response can be considered in applying these 5 marks, as some students may not go into detail about higher needs due to the short timeframe of the bushwalk.	0-5 marks

#### Strong Response:

Stronger responses to this question were able to name and define each of the levels within Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (5 stage model). These respondents would then provide greater detail in their answers; by discussing actions the leader would take to ensure a group could move through each stage of the model. Some of the responses focused on the group moving through each of the stages, while other strong responses provided greater detail on different actions the leader could take within the initial stages.

#### Weaker Responses:

Weaker responses would often be able to name the levels of Maslow’s Hierarchy but would often provide little to no definition of the stages. Weaker responses could often identify those lower levels (basic needs) had to be met prior to moving to higher stages, though often provided little detail in how the leader could progress their participants through the levels.

## Question 7:

During a two-day bushwalk, two participants are constantly disagreeing about the pace of the group. One participant feels the pace is too fast, while the other believes the group is moving too slowly. Tension is rising, and the groups morale is being affected.

List One strategy for resolving this conflict and one less appropriate strategy.

Explain why the chosen strategy could work in this situation and why the lesser strategy may not be as effective.

### Assessment Strategy

Key Information	Summary	Marks
Appropriate Strategy Identified	Candidate clearly identifies one suitable conflict-resolution strategy applicable to outdoor leadership (e.g., collaboration, compromise, competition, accommodation,).	2 marks
Less Appropriate Strategy Identified	Candidate identifies one strategy that is realistically <i>less effective</i> or inappropriate in the situation (e.g., collaboration, compromise, competition, accommodation, avoidance).	2 marks
Explanation: Why the Appropriate Strategy Could Work	Explains how and why the chosen strategy would reduce tension, support group cohesion, address both participants' needs, or improve morale.	3 marks
Explanation: Why the Less Appropriate Strategy is Ineffective	Provides clear reasoning for why the less appropriate strategy might worsen conflict, reduce morale or fail to address needs.	3 marks

### Stronger Responses:

Stronger responses were able to correctly name and define two different conflict resolution techniques, identifying both an appropriate and inappropriate resolution technique. Within their response, stronger responses highlighted how the strategy would be implemented within the conflict, the impacts this approach would have on the tension, cohesion and morale of the group and their respect for the leader.

### Weaker Responses:

Weaker responses would often discuss two different conflict resolution techniques; however, they were often named incorrectly or the justification behind their application to the situation was missing definition and details relating to the impact a certain approach would have on the group.

## Question 8

You are leading a group of students on a rock-climbing day trip. The group is polite and they are still getting to know each other. As the day progresses, some of the participants are expressing frustration relating to the difficulty of the activity. Whilst others are finding the activity to be too easy.

Using a group development theory (Tuckman's Theory of Group development) Identify the current stage of the group and explain the characteristics of this stage.

Describe one strategy you, as the leader, could use to guide the group through this stage and facilitate progression to the next stage

### Assessment Strategy

Key Information	Summary	Marks
Identification of Tuckman's Stage	Candidate correctly identifies the stage (likely <i>Storming</i> ) based on the scenario.	2 marks
Explanation of Stage Characteristics	Candidate describes key features of the identified stage (e.g., emerging conflict, differing expectations, frustration, testing boundaries, uneven engagement).	3 marks
Leader Strategy to Support the Group	Candidate identifies one appropriate leadership strategy consistent with Tuckman's theory (e.g., facilitating communication, clarifying goals, adjusting challenge levels, encouraging teamwork).	4 marks
Explanation of How the Strategy Facilitates Progression	Candidate explains <i>why</i> the chosen strategy would help move the group toward the next stage (Norming), improve cohesion, reduce frustration, or balance engagement.	1 mark

### Stronger Responses:

Stronger responses were able to identify that the group were within the Forming/Storming stages of Tuckman's Stages of Group Development. They would provide a concise explanation of the key characteristics of the stage; and provide a well-justified leadership strategy the aligned with the needs of the group members in this stage to progress them to the following stage in the theory.

**Weaker Response:**Weaker responses often showed limited understanding of Tuckman's Group Development Theory and/or failed to correctly identify the stage demonstrated in the provided scenario. These responses typically provided minimal discussion on the characteristics of the stages and limited discussion on actions the leader could take to assist the group in moving through their current issues and progressing to the next stage in the model.

## Question 9

You are leading a group of students on a rafting expedition. During the pre-launch briefing, the weather begins to deteriorate, making it difficult for the group to stay focused. Alex misinterprets your instructions, having missed a previous lesson where important rafting terminology was introduced; Chris seems to be having difficulty keeping track of the many instructions; Sam is struggling to hear properly due to the increasing wind; and Morgan is visibly anxious, distracted, and appears to be unable to comprehend instructions. Identify each of the following barriers to communication present in this scenario:

- Who is experiencing overload?
- Who is experiencing semantic noise?
- Who is experiencing internal noise?
- Who is experiencing external noise?

For each barrier, explain a strategy you could use to overcome it and improve communication with the group.

### Assessment Strategy

Key Information	Summary	Marks
Identifying each of barriers	Correctly identifies each of the barriers to the student who was experiencing this barrier.	2 marks
Explaining what this barrier is in relation to the scenario	Gives a short link/explanation noting how this barrier is exemplified in the scenario for that student.	4 marks
Discussion on strategies to alleviate/remove the barrier	Provides appropriate, specific, and practical strategies clearly linked to each identified barrier and individual	4 marks

### Stronger Responses:

Stronger responses clearly identified each communication barrier in the scenario and accurately matched this to the correct student. These responses would then clarify this pairing with a definition of the barrier and its relationship with what each student was experiencing within the scenario. Stronger responses would then discuss context-appropriate strategies that a leader could employ to overcome the barrier that the student was experiencing.

### Weaker Responses:

Weaker responses often struggled to correctly match each of the students to the appropriate communication barrier – or simply matched the student to the barrier without providing any more information. Additionally, weaker responses often provided limited or vague strategies on how the leader could overcome the barrier the students were experiencing in the scenario.

## Section D – Human Nature Relationships

### Question 10

**There have been a number of environmental issues in Tasmania that have significantly influenced how people value and connect with the natural environment. Briefly describe an environmental issue specific to Tasmania (past or present). Critically discuss how this issue has influenced or changed public attitudes, values, and the way people relate to and access natural environments in Tasmania**

#### **General Feedback:**

The overall performance in Question 10 was strong with a wide range of historic and contemporary environmental issues discussed including the Damming of Lake Pedder, the Franklin Dam proposal, Salmon Farming, Tamar River Mud, Iconic Walks and Adventure Tourism Proposals, Cable Cars, Increased Visitation/Overcrowding, Logging and Mining.

#### **Assessment Strategy:**

The marking tool provided by the setter/critics was used to guide the marking team with Theory Related to Human Nature Relationships discussed and added to where necessary.

#### **Stronger Responses:**

Stronger answers for Question 10 had a detailed discussion of two or more proponents/opponents or stakeholders involved in the issue and could identify all the relevant HNR theory for those stakeholders such as their values for nature, environmental worldviews, metaphors for nature and where they sit on Peter Martin's Signposts to Nature. The strongest responses could then link these stakeholders to their impact on prevailing attitudes, values and beliefs to nature in Tasmania and how they might have created changes more broadly.

Strengths in Criterion 8 for Question 10 were candidates' ability to logically sequence their ideas, follow a clear essay structure, writing with authority by correctly using and applying HNR vocabulary and responses that answered all elements of the question.

Common areas for improvement in this section for Criterion 7 were candidates' ability to discuss changing public values in relation to the environmental issue. Responses that focussed heavily on an environmental issue without applying HNR theory or articulating a shift in public values were awarded lower ratings. Improvement in Criterion 8 for Question 10 can be found in correct use of specialised terminology, clear structure and flow of key ideas, correct use of spelling and grammar.

## Question 11

In an age where smartphones provide instant access to maps, weather updates and ease of communication, they also pose a significant distraction. Instead of fully immersing themselves in the sights, sounds and rhythms of the natural world, some find their attention pulled toward social media, notifications, and the urge to document every moment through photographs and videos. As a result, the very technology designed to enhance experiences and improve society may diminish the depth of relationships with nature. Explain how, as an outdoor leader, you can help facilitate meaningful connections to nature. Critically discuss how digital technology can influence participants' connection with the natural environment during outdoor experiences. In your response, consider both the benefits and drawbacks of digital technology in nature-based settings.

### General Feedback:

A high percentage of candidates chose Question 11 for Part 2 of Section D. All candidates responding to this question demonstrated a good understanding of the use of technology in nature and made comment on some of the benefits and drawbacks of digital technology in nature-based settings. Common benefits were focussed on safety, navigation, communication and interpretation of flora and fauna. Common drawbacks relating to the use of technology in nature related to increased access as users posted their experiences on social media, technology as a barrier to creating meaningful connections to nature due to consistent distraction.

### Stronger Responses:

Strong responses to Question 11 were able to clearly explain the ways people connect to nature, focussed on the role of the leader in facilitating connection to nature and articulated relevant strategies a leader can use to facilitate connection to nature and progression through Peter Martin's Signposts to Nature towards more caring attitudes. Common strategies a leader could use included extended trips in nature, repeat visits, increasing proximity, thorough planning and trip preparation.

### Feedback for Improvement:

Common areas for improvement in Question 11 is candidates' ability to incorporate relevant HNR theory to support key ideas throughout their response. Typically, these responses did not outline ways that the leader can improve people's connection to nature, rather focusing simply on a discussion of the positives and drawbacks of technology use.

## Question 12

**There is a Tasmanian Aboriginal saying meaning “We are Country and Country is us”. This saying reflects a deep, holistic connection to Country, including not just land, but people, stories, language, spirituality and all other forms of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture. Discuss the significance of this Aboriginal understanding of Country. How can outdoor leaders draw upon this worldview to foster a meaningful sense of place and space? Consider how leadership practices can respectfully integrate Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives to promote connection, identity and belonging.**

### **General Feedback:**

This question was chosen by few students compared to Question 11. Strong responses to this question described how leaders can respectfully integrate Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives to promote connection, identity and belonging. Key strategies a leader may use to respectfully facilitate connection to nature include: history and truth telling, acknowledgement and respect, interpretation and learning about Country, songlines and storytelling, follow cultural protocols, reflection. Strong responses also analysed how leaders draw upon Aboriginal understanding of Country to foster a meaningful sense of place and space. Key HNR theory could include Aboriginal worldviews – eco-centric, sense of place, kinship, stewardship and care for country, reciprocity.