

The Outdoor Code of Practice

Conducting Safe Exercise Outdoors

Why is there a Code of Practice?

Exercise Anywhere has spent years developing professional training courses for instructors and building the reputation of the brands to the public. As part of that process, Exercise Anywhere has adopted the Outdoor Code of Practice (“OCOP”) to encourage best practice by trained Instructors and Leaders. The code of practice will be promoted to consumers as a quality assurance/kite mark. The aim is that the public should have confidence in their instructor when participating in Outdoor Exercise and that they are operating in a professional and safe manner. Ultimately it demonstrates recognition to those who have invested in their personal development.

The OCOP is there for the benefit of both the public and Instructors, helping ensure the delivery of Outdoor Exercise is of the highest standard.

The OCOP is not exhaustive and it has taken into consideration that there is a diverse range of instructors, whether they instruct for financial gain or as a voluntary activity. It is the instructor’s responsibility to keep up to date with current legislation and health & safety appropriate to them. This OCOP is intended as a minimum benchmark to which Instructors should operate. Although Exercise Anywhere has developed guidelines, specific courses and modules to assist with training in a number of areas, the onus is on the instructor to have the correct qualifications and continue their Personal Development for delivering Fitness & Exercise to their particular market.

What it Covers:

Teaching Technique:

- Instructors will teach Outdoor Exercise based on clear stages of technique progression, with due consideration to the emotional as well as physical needs of the participant, and reflecting the physical capabilities of the participant.
- Instructors will keep up to date on the latest developments and techniques in Outdoor Exercise and the health and fitness benefits of good technique.
- Where instructors are delivering technical lessons, the group size should be no more than 15 participants to one instructor, thus ensuring quality and individual attention.
- Sessions will always incorporate appropriate warm up exercises and cool down stretches.

Personal Practice:

- It is important that an instructor’s own personal technique reflects the full anatomical movement as taught by NWUK. All instructors will regularly practice their own technique and seek feedback and refresher tuition from other NWUK instructors or the national NWUK team.

Professional Development:

- All persons delivering or Leading Outdoor Exercise will maintain an ongoing demonstrable programme of continuing professional development (CPD) in relation to the specific exercises being delivered. Evidence of CPD may include: attendance at an Exercise Anywhere event; shared teaching with another instructor; attendance of any relevant fitness-, health- or skills-based training course.
- All Instructors and Leaders will participate in any mandatory training in the event of significant changes in legislation or standards. Mandatory training may be delivered as face-to-face or web-based training.

- Instructors, Coaches and Leaders will comply with the Manual, specific Programme manual and Code of Practice at all times.
- Instructors, Coaches and Leaders will protect the name and goodwill of Exercise Anywhere (or any associated Brands) by conducting themselves in a responsible and professional manner at all times.

Use of Nordic Walking & other Equipment:

- Instructors and Leaders will keep up to date on the development of Outdoor Exercise and outdoor equipment, in particular poles, and be able to give informed kit advice to participants. Instructors will teach using equipment that have been designed to provide specific strength and stiffness for the technique being taught or used; whilst walking with poles, ensure grips are ergonomically designed if using strapless poles or suitable hand straps facilitate correct technique; and the "paws" are removable for different terrains.
- If other fitness equipment is used within sessions (bands, balls, weights, etc) they are only used according to manufacturers' guidelines, condition is checked prior to every session and risk assessments are carried out regularly. The same process should be applied for any fixed items such as park benches and Trim Trails.

Safety of Clients, the Instructor and/or Leader:

- All instructors, Coaches and Leaders will ensure they have adequate insurance and the relevant level of qualification for the environment/terrain in which they teach and for the fitness/health levels of the participants of every session.
- Instructors, Coaches and Leaders will prioritise the health & safety of themselves and their clients at all times by preparing sessions in advance, risk assessing routes and making contingency plans for incidents/emergencies.
- All Instructors, Coaches and Leaders will hold a suitable and up-to-date first aid qualification that includes CPR. The instructor and Leader will always carry a first aid kit.
- Prior to administering any exercise instructors, Coaches and Leaders must ensure that participants are suitably able to undertake such exercise, this is best done through a medical pre-screening method. Instructors will use PARQ HCS, or PARMEDex forms (subject to GDPR) to assess the readiness of participants to take part in the planned session and will ensure sessions are taught to the correct level for those taking part.

Induction:

The OCOP requires that requires instructors ensure that all users understand the session, what is expected of them, and how to use any featured equipment

- Documented system in place
- Evidence of a pre-activity screening process
- Evidence of an induction process

Customer Perception of Operational Performance:

To provide the best possible experience for customers, instructors and Leaders must:

- Respond to communications received from customers or potential customer, ideally within 24 hours but 48 hours as an absolute maximum.
- Have in place, automated electronic or voicemail notification should they be unable to respond within above timescale e.g when on holiday.
- Ensure that customer complaints are acknowledged and direct communication is maintained with the customer while seeking to resolve the matter
- A complaints feedback procedure

- Evidence of response and action

Modification of activity or venue:

Classes, Walks and Activities will be influenced by factors beyond the control of instructors. The OCOP requires that Instructors, Coaches and Leaders have plans in place to manage this. Examples of this include the weather, which may mean that it would be ill-advised to allow an event to take place or to allow one that has started to continue.

- Organisers need to consider 'worst case scenarios' in the early stages of planning. In particular, procedures need to be in place for responding to really bad weather, or an equally disruptive occurrence.
- In particular, the problems of communicating changes of plan to participants at the last minute, or during the event, need to be identified in the risk assessment stage and appropriate safety measures instituted.

Instructors, Coaches and Leaders must have procedures for cancelling events, including during the planning process for the cancellation and notifying participants. This is especially important regarding GDPR and having the ability to contact participants or next of kin yet adhering to the security criteria of customers details, whilst in the outdoor environment

Respect for the environment and landowners:

- instructors, Coaches and Leaders are ambassadors for Exercise Anywhere (and Associated Brands) and have a role as guardians of the natural environment we walk in. It is important that instructors respect the areas we are operating in and project a professional image to other users and inhabitants.
- Instructors and Leaders will follow the Country Code and ensure participants do the same.
- Instructors and Leaders will be mindful of the environmental impact of leading groups in some areas of the countryside and seek to minimise the damage done to paths, wildlife and plants etc.
- Instructors, Coaches and Leaders will obtain permission from the landowners before using their space.

Respect to other NWUK Instructors & Projects:

When planning new location for delivery or cohort of people, instructors should always investigate to see whether there is another instructor (or project) working in that area, always make contact and ensure planned session does not conflict. If for any reason, either party is unwilling to co-operate, it should be referred back to Exercise Anywhere.

Personal Practice:

- It is important that an instructors', Coaches' and Leaders' own personal technique reflects the full anatomical movement as taught by Exercise Anywhere. All instructors, Coaches and Leaders will regularly practice their own technique and seek feedback and refresher tuition from other instructors and the National Tutors.

Professional Development:

- All instructors, Coaches and Leaders will continue to develop their knowledge and skills in relation to nordic walking.
- All instructors and Coaches will attend any mandatory workshops (maximum 1 per year) in the event that Exercise Anywhere feel training is required in order to meet changes in legislation or standards.
- Reps registered Instructors will gain the required number of CPD points every 2 years to remain registered and up to date.
- Instructors, Coaches and Leaders will comply with the appropriate Manual and Code of Practice at all times;

- Instructors, Coaches and Leaders will protect the name and goodwill of Exercise Anywhere (and associated Brands) by conducting themselves in a responsible manner;

First Aid:

Basic first aid equipment should be carried at all times.

- Instructors and Leaders should carry adequate first aid equipment for the environment they operate in
- Keep copies of first aid training recorded and certificates retained
- Ensure Accident and RIDDOR reporting procedures in place (see below)
- Ensure there are adequate methods of communicating the need for further medical assistance if required and this has been included within the risk assessment for the activity

Incident, Accident and Emergency procedures

These written procedures should not be seen as a substitute for training, but as an accompaniment, or induction check list. You can't expect to cover everything. One approach is to address both ends of the scale.

- Provide guidance for those minor situations which are comparatively common and therefore quite likely to occur, such as transport failing to arrive (or breaks down) or what to do if someone sprains or twists an ankle, and also:
- Provide guidance for the more serious or worst case scenario such as a serious or fatal accident.

Some of these solutions will be applicable anywhere; others will be very site specific.

Furthermore, instructors should have a meaningful system of recording incidents. Reviewing significant 'incidents' as well as accidents is an important way of trying to make sure it doesn't happen again. Trends identified as part of this regular review should be acted upon and risk assessments and working practices amended as a result.

Once there has been a serious accident or a particularly 'dangerous' occurrence, there are legal requirements to report it to the appropriate Health and Safety Executive or Local Authority Environmental Health Department ('enforcement agencies'). In some cases this may not include those situations where you send someone to hospital to check if there is, for instance, a broken bone and where the diagnosis in hospital is that there is only a minor injury such as bruising. Reporting requirements are more stringent in the area where a member of the public (and this includes activity participants) as opposed to an 'employee' is injured. There is a useful leaflet about the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) available from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE Books) on (01787).881165.

Instructors must have proper documentation advising on action to be taken in the event of an emergency situation is in place. Significant incidents and accidents are reported internally and all 'RIDDOR' incidents are reported to the appropriate Health and Safety Executive or Local Authority office.

Disclosure & Barring Service

All instructors, Coaches and Leaders who have direct contact with children and vulnerable adults must be checked through a standards or enhanced disclosure via the Disclosure and Barring Service in accordance with the cohort to which they deliver Exercise Anywhere services.

Exercise Anywhere has introduced a specific voluntary code of practice whereby instructors, Coaches and Leaders should be in possession of a current DBS certificate for any delivery of Exercise Anywhere services. Exercise Anywhere will accept a current valid certificate from another umbrella organisation.

Following issuing of a certificate, it is the responsibility of the instructor to notify Exercise Anywhere in writing should the DBS certificate require re-application due to change in personal circumstance, no longer be valid or information to be corrected at any stage. The certificate will required to be renewed bi annually.

Intellectual Property and Brand:

Exercise Anywhere Instructors, Coaches and Leaders agree to use the Exercise Anywhere Logo and all associated Brand Logos in accordance with the terms of the "Exercise Anywhere Brand Guidelines"; not disclose the know-how or IP provided by Exercise Anywhere to a competitor or any third party without the written consent of Exercise Anywhere; will not bring the name of Exercise Anywhere (or associated Brands) in to disrepute or represent the brand in a public domain without the written consent of one of the Directors.

GDPR

All Instructors need to fully understand and comply with GDPR. Specifically, their responsibilities when collecting, storing and sharing data.

Exercise Anywhere require all Instructors to carry out a Privacy Impact Assessment and confirm they have a policy in place and are compliant

HMRC

Instructors, Coaches (and Leaders if appropriate) will be Registered as self employed with HMRC, if self employed or sole trader