



The South African Adventure Industry Association (SA AIA) General Guidelines for Training and Assessment of Skills for Adventure Guides

Approval page

The signatories hereof, being duly authorised thereto, by their signatures hereto authorise the execution of the work detailed herein, or confirm their acceptance of the contents hereof and authorise the implementation/adoption thereof, as the case may be, for and on behalf of the parties represented by them.

Author



SA AIA Skills & Ratification Committee
Chairperson: Neil Margetts

06/11/2025

Date

Approved



SA AIA Executive Director:
J Sunkel

31 October 2025

Date

Amendment history

Document revision	Date effective	Reason for update
A	August 2025	New document
B	30 October 2025	Comments from J du Plooy included
1	31 October 2025	Document Approved

Table of Contents

1. Scope	6
2. Learner Previous Experience Requirements	6
3. First Aid Requirements	6
4. Pre Trip Planning	7
5. Gear Management	7
6. Risk Management	8
7. Pre-Trip Communication	9
8. Pre Event Tasks and Briefing	9
9. Lead, organise and manage a group during an adventure event	10
10. Concluding the Guided Event	10
11. Version Control and Review	11

This page is intentionally left blank.

1. Scope

This document serves as a template by which all skills training should be performed, and an assessment should be done. This should be interpreted in context of all these main headings and requirements below. Additionally for the assessment, this must be implemented in conjunction to the more detailed **Skill Guideline Document** for each skill assessed which can be found on the South African Adventure Industry Association (SA AIA) Technical Competency Framework available on the SA AIA website here: <https://www.saaia.org.za/technical-competencies>

It must be noted the reasoning for these requirements is primarily to provide the learner with a safe and effective guiding experience, and the objective of each component relates to address the risks addressed after each point.

2. Learner Previous Experience Requirements

- 2.1 Each learner should have the specified experience before their final assessment, as required on that specific **Skill Guideline Document**.
- 2.2 There could also be some experience before the training component, either from working as an assistant guide or from live outdoor activities.
- 2.3 The experience must comply with the following criteria:
 - 2.3.1 Current.
 - 2.3.2 Related to the skill being assessed.
 - 2.3.3 Authentic – provable from a reference person or event.
 - 2.3.4 Diverse – not just one location or one event only.
 - 2.3.5 Show some leadership in the event.
- 2.4 The experience must be presented as a comprehensive logbook arranged with the most recent event on top and go back in time from there.

RISK ADDRESSED: THE REQUIREMENT FOR A LEARNER TO HAVE SUFFICIENT DEPTH OF EXPERIENCE BEFORE BECOMING AN ADVENTURE GUIDE ADDRESSES THE NEED FOR THAT LEARNER TO HAVE THE BACKGROUND TO EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS CHALLENGING AND EMERGENCY EVENTS.

3. First Aid Requirements

- 3.1 The learner must have the required, accredited first aid qualification before their training and assessment. This is specified in the **Skill Guideline Document**.

- 3.2 The first aid is encouraged to either have in it the required wilderness components which were incorporated into the course and assessment or the student must have a separate approved wilderness add-on component training and assessment certificate.

RISK ADDRESSED: THE REQUIREMENT FOR A LEARNER TO HAVE A CERTIFIED FIRST AID CERTIFICATION WITH THE REQUIRED WILDERNESS COMPONENT ADDRESSES THE NEED FOR THAT STUDENT TO MANAGE EMERGENCY EVENTS IN A WILDERNESS OR RURAL SETTING IN AN EFFECTIVE AND SAFE WAY. THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE FIRST AID QUALIFICATION TO BE FROM A CERTIFIED SERVICE PROVIDER THROUGH THE QCTO/HEALTHSETA IS TO ENSURE THERE IS SUFFICIENT STANDARD OF THE TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT. NON-REGISTERED SERVICE PROVIDER CERTIFICATION SHOWS NO GUARENTEE THAT THE LEARNER WAS TRAINIED AND ASSESSED AT A SUFFICIENT LEVEL.

4. Pre Trip Planning

- 4.1 The learner must show that they can sufficiently pre plan a trip and cover the requirements to make a smooth-running and safe event. Some of the necessary components in the planning are listed below, but other planning components can be added at the training providers discretion.
- 4.2 The Learner can choose objectives appropriate to the client/group and was aware of their and the client's abilities and matched it to the objective correctly.
- 4.2.1 The Learner researched the background information to the area.
- 4.2.1.1 The Learner obtained the necessary permits or permissions.
- 4.2.1.2 The Learner can prepare and plan the menu with due consideration for nutrition and dietary requirements.
- 4.2.1.3 The learner can compile an itinerary of the event incorporating all the components involved.
- 4.2.1.4 The learner showed organisation skills and attention to detail.

RISK ADDRESSED: THE REQUIREMENT FOR A LEARNER TO SHOW THAT THEY CAN ADEQUATELY PLAN A TRIP, WILL CONTRIBUTE TO PREVENT INCIDENTS FROM OCCURING. THE PLANNING OF AN EVENT IF DONE CORRECTLY SHOULD COVER ASPECTS THAT COULD BRING POTENTIAL SAFETY RISKS, SUCH AS MATCHING THE EVENT TO THE CLIENT'S ABILITY.

5. Gear Management

- 5.1 The learner should know and understand industry gear limitations and expiry requirements.

- 5.2 The learner should be able to and, in their assessment, do gear inspections and identify faults and not use that equipment in the event.
- 5.3 The learner should be able to correctly use the correct gear for the correct application and correctly facilitate their client to use the gear as required in the **Skill Guideline Document**.

RISK ADDRESSED: THE REQUIREMENT FOR A LEARNER TO SHOW THAT THEY CAN CORRECTLY MANAGE GEAR WOULD PREVENT ACCIDENTS ASSOCIATED WITH GEAR FAILURE AND/OR INCORRECT AND/OR MISUSE.

6. Risk Management

- 6.1 The learner must be able to identify potential risks for an event.
- 6.2 The learner must be able to interpret and apply a risk assessment plan and apply it in their guiding event.
- 6.3 The learner must be able to interpret and apply an emergency response plan and apply it in their guiding event.
- 6.4 Perform effective safety briefings before all potentially risk events.
- 6.5 Adapt the guiding event to changes in circumstances.
- 6.6 The learner performed sufficient hygiene in the managing of food and drinks, with themselves and their utensils presented in a clean hygienic manner. There was also provision for their clients to clean their hands and also operate hygienically.
- 6.7 Manage an emergency incident effectively, in a set up simulation of such an event in the assessment of the learner with the following components:
 - 6.7.1 The safety of the guide themselves, client and other people are prioritised.
 - 6.7.2 The incident is managed in an authoritative manner, with clear instructions.
 - 6.7.3 All the required tasks are covered.
 - 6.7.4 There is correct and comprehensive communication with the rescue party.
 - 6.7.5 An incident report was facilitated to be filled out.

RISK ADDRESSED: THE REQUIREMENT FOR A LEARNER TO SHOW KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF SAFETY PROTOCOLS AND RISK ASSESSMENTS WILL HIGHLIGHT THE RISKS TO THEM AND FACILITATE THE EFFECTIVE PREVENTION AND HANDLING OF ANY INCIDENT. THE CORRECT HANDLING OF AN INCIDENT WILL ENSURE THAT THE INCIDENT WILL NOT CAUSE FURTHER DANGER OR INJURY TO THE GUIDE, THE VICTIM OR ANY OF THE OTHER PEOPLE IN THE VICINITY. CORRECT HYGIENE IN CATERING PREVENTS ANY SICKNESS OR ILLNESS

7. Pre-Trip Communication

- 7.1 The learner must show that they can communicate to their clients before an event adequately so that there is no missing information and all participants get all the information needed to facilitate a safe and successful trip. Some of the items that need to be communicated, but not limited to this list, other items can be added according to the assessor's discretion.
- 7.1.1 The Learner adequately researched the predicted weather forecast and took alternative action if it was needed.
- 7.1.2 The Learner sent a summary of what to expect.
- 7.1.3 The Learner co-ordinated all transport arrangements correctly.
- 7.1.4 The Client was asked about relevant dietary needs, and the Learner adapted the menu accordingly.
- 7.1.5 The Learner asked and took the appropriate action to adapt the trip or tour, based on the relevant medical history of the Client.
- 7.1.6 The Learner sent a list of gear the Clients need to bring and what the guide or venue will provide.
- 7.1.7 All special needs were identified and addressed.
- 7.1.8 The Learner demonstrated they can obtain full payment/deposit for the trip.
- 7.1.9 The learner communicated effectively the terms and conditions required in the booking.
- 7.1.10 The learner sent out the indemnity form and facilitated that it gets signed by all participants and/or their parents/guardians.

RISK ADDRESSED: PROPER COMMUNICATION WITH THE CLIENTS WILL ADDRESS ANY PROBLEMS OR RISKS THAT COULD OCCUR DUE TO MISINFORMATION OR MISSING INFORMATION

8. Pre Event Tasks and Briefing

- 8.1 The learner must perform all equipment and client checks to ensure readiness for the adventure at the point where it is about to start.
- 8.2 The learner must be able to perform a comprehensive, understandable briefing to their clients with and not limited to the following points:
 - 8.2.1 All the client's attention is obtained and maintained.
 - 8.2.2 The briefing was done in an upbeat and positive manner.
 - 8.2.3 They introduced themselves and their organisation.
 - 8.2.4 There is a summary of what the event will entail.
 - 8.2.5 The client/group was informed of the possible risks that could be encountered on this event in a friendly, non-threatening way.
 - 8.2.6 The client/group were informed of acceptable behaviour for the trip or tour.
 - 8.2.7 The Learner explained environmentally friendly rubbish and human waste disposal procedures, and then monitored it at all times to achieve a leave no trace environment.

- 8.2.8 The group was asked if they had any questions and all the outstanding issues were addressed.

RISK ADDRESSED: CHECKING OF GEAR JUST BEFORE THE EVENT IS ESSENTIAL TO MAKE SURE THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS IN ITS PERFORMANCE, PLUS PROPER COMMUNICATION WITH THE CLIENTS WILL ENSURE THAT ALL THE CLIENTS WILL KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM

9. Lead, organise and manage a group during an adventure event

- 9.1 The learner must comply with all the requirements on the **Skill Guideline Document** for performing this event, correctly, effectively and safely.

RISK ADDRESSED: EVERY ASPECT OF THE SKILLS GUIDELINE DOCUMENT MUST BE COMPLETED CORRECTLY TO KEEP THEMSELVES AND THEIR CLIENTS SAFE DURING HIGH-RISK EVENTS. THIS WILL ENSURE THESE HIGH RISK SKILLS ARE PERFORMED WITHOUT ANY INCIDENT, INJURY, LOSS OF LIFE, OR DAMAGE OR LOSS OF PROPERTY.

10. Concluding the Guided Event

- 10.1 The learning must at the end of the event do the following:
- 10.1.1 Perform a post event briefing to tie all things up.
 - 10.1.2 Collect and ensure all the gear handed out and used is returned and not damaged.
 - 10.1.3 The gear must be cleaned, recorded and packed away.
 - 10.1.4 Complete all final administrative tasks to conclude the trip, such as trip reports, filling out of any documentation such as indemnities, incident reports, etc.
 - 10.1.5 Perform event feedback and some post event marketing.

RISK ADDRESSED: THE CONCLUDING OF THE EVENT EFFECTIVELY MAKES SURE THERE IS NO LOSS OF GEAR OR LOSS OF SAFE GEAR FUNCTIONING, AND ALL INCIDENTS ARE PROPERLY RECORDED AND AVAILABLE FOR THE PLANNING OF FUTURE TRIPS TO BE MORE SAFE

11. Version Control and Review

Item	Details
Date of Publication	August 2025
Version Number	B
Review Cycle	Biannual (every 2 years) or upon curriculum revision
Responsible SA AIA Subcommittee	Skills and Ratification Committee