

# IOL Accreditation

## Designed for all types of practitioner



The Institute for Outdoor Learning has developed a range of Professional Accreditations for practitioners at different stages of practice within the outdoor learning profession.

### Who is the accreditation process for?

It is designed for all types of practitioners – youth workers, teachers, teaching assistants, therapists, development trainers, instructors – working within any branch of outdoor learning including adventure, environmental studies, forest schools, bushcraft, expedition work, recreation, drama, art or any other area of outdoor learning with a developmental aim.

You can apply for the awards regardless of whether you are employed, self-employed or a volunteer.

Accreditation is about all aspects of the person. Some job descriptions do not allow full expression of professional practice. Therefore, we allow experience from other aspects of your life/career to be drawn upon to provide evidence of competence.

All these awards are for experienced practitioners and accreditation at any level indicates that nationally recognised standards within the outdoor learning profession have been met.

### Why be accredited?

#### Achieving Accreditation:

- Demonstrates your depth of experience to employers and clients, recognising the full range of skills and knowledge you possess to be an effective outdoor learning practitioner
- Indicates your commitment to developing yourself and the profession, broadening your network and development options.
- Provides a framework for development of your professional reflective practice that supports your other qualifications and increases wider recognition of your professionalism.

### Which level of accreditation is for me?

There are four levels of accreditation. The different levels within the scheme indicate the level of experience and competence of the practitioner and also the contribution that they are making to the field of outdoor learning. For more information on each level of accreditation, please consult the linked pages on the website.

You can use the following documents, which are available on the IOL Professional Accreditation web pages, to help you decide which level of accreditation will suit you best:

- Guidelines for deciding upon level of accreditation
- Self Assessment - where applicable this document will be included in the relevant Accreditation level information

### Levels of accreditation

- **Registered Practitioner (RPIOL)** – for practitioners who have consolidated experience of independently facilitating sessions with developmental aims in controlled situations.
- **Accredited Practitioner (APIOL)** – for practitioners who have consolidated experience of independently facilitating outdoor learning programmes (as opposed to sessions) with developmental aims in challenging situations.
- **Leading Practitioner (LPIOL)** – for senior outdoor professionals who are making a significant contribution to outdoor learning at regional level.
- **Fellow (FIOL)** - for senior practitioners who have made an outstanding, strategic contribution to outdoor learning at national level. (Accreditation at this level is also awarded without application to outstanding contributors to the field from time to time)

To enrol on RPIOL and APIOL, please contact Louise at IOL or T: 01228 564580 and see the Professional Accreditation pages on the IOL website. <http://www.outdoor-learning.org/Default.aspx?tabid=230>

Guidelines for IOL Accreditation Levels  
'Levels of Reflective Practice' & 'Levels of Leadership' are on the following pages

# Guidelines for IOL Accreditation Levels

## Levels of Reflective Practice

	Below RPIOL	RPIOL	APIOL	LPIOL	Fellow
<b>Guiding principles</b>	Follows procedures without seeking to question or challenge	Understands reasons behind procedures; can adapt them to different situations; questions procedures and looks for better ways of doing things	Knows what basic principles and ethics guide them; has developed a variety of ways of doing things and adapts appropriately of doing things	In addition, can explain the influence of their personal values on their practice of doing things	In addition, questions their core beliefs, values and motivations
<b>Focus of work and level of response</b>	Responds to immediate requirements within clear guidelines or with precedent	Analyses and solves short term problems and some non-routine tasks	Investigates and resolves causes of problems, improves systems	Takes proactive action to solve complex problems and take advantage of and create opportunities	Directs and creates long term projects with national impact
<b>Understanding of the field</b>	Understands aims of own workplace, but doesn't yet relate them to the wider outdoor field	Understands functioning of own workplace and its relationship to the outdoor learning sector as a whole	Takes an interest in different approaches to outdoor learning in their workplace and also in the challenges the field is tackling	Understands future trends outside own work area, their impact and opportunities they provide	Understands long term societal trends and their impact on the whole sector
<b>Frequency and aim of reflection</b>	Carries out basic post-session reflection to address obvious session issues	Reflects both during and after their work. Uses this to improve practice as a whole	Continuously reflects. Uses this to improve practice as a whole. Seeks to deal with causes and not just symptoms	Continuously reflects. Uses this to help shape their role within the sector as a whole. Challenges assumptions and the status quo	Seen as a source of reflective wisdom by other practitioners. Demonstrates sustained and consistent high standards of professional practice
<b>Focus of own Professional Development</b>	Primarily focused on developing their own technical and safety skills	Seeks to improve their skills or competence in the round (soft as well as hard skills)	Professional Development is an integral part of their professional life. They know how their practice has developed over the years, what they are learning at present and have plans for their future development	Continuously develops self and motivates others to develop their practice	Inspires and motivates others through the way they communicate their vision and values
<b>Contribution to the outdoor sector</b>	Shares good practice within own workplace	Seeks opportunities to meet with other practitioners outside the workplace to exchange ideas on good practice and to learn new things	Puts something back into the field inside or outside the workplace	Delivers concrete results for practitioners in the region through own personal influence	Gives selfless service which brings distinction and quality to outdoor learning on a national level

# Guidelines for IOL Accreditation Levels

## Levels of Leadership

	Below RPIOL	RPIOL	APIOL	LPIOL	Fellow
<b>Range of work</b>	Own practice within single sessions in one context. (ie type of group, venue, activity, course objectives, course duration etc)	Own practice, running single sessions within programmes, in more than one context	Own practice, running programmes and co-ordinating the work of others, in a variety of contexts	Building the practice of others and influencing across the region/sector, in one or more contexts	Building the practice of others nationally, nationally recognised influence and/or experience in one or more contexts
<b>Level of decision-making to manage benefit against risk</b>	Operates within strict guidelines in controlled situations. Works within procedures and precedent only, responds to immediate requirements	Operates independently within controlled situations. Analyses and solves short term problems and some non-routine tasks	Operates independently within challenging situations. Investigates and resolves causes of problems, improves systems	Takes proactive action to solve complex problems and take advantage of opportunities, in order to manage risk/benefit of organisation and/or create new projects with regional impact.	Manages risk/benefit in highly uncertain situations to direct and create long term projects and alliances with national impact
<b>Span of relationships and level of conflict management</b>	Their own work	Their own work and working effectively in a team with generally helpful individuals	Co-ordinates work of other staff (not necessarily in a management role): builds effective relationships with mainly co-operative teams	Influences wide range of people across region/sector. Deals with people with conflicting agendas	Influences people at all levels, including outside the sector. Resolves considerable conflict between groups with differing agendas
<b>Design and development role</b>	Session leader operating within tight guidelines. Some scope for session adaptation to individual/group needs	Independent session leader. Has adapted and tailored sessions designed by others, to the needs of different groups/individuals	Overall responsibility for adapting and implementing programmes and for dealing with issues arising	Leads change across the region through innovative programmes, projects and/or imaginative professional practice	Planner and developer of radical new projects that initiate substantial national change, development or national impact on values, vision, thought patterns of sector
<b>Experience of facilitating learning</b>	Delivers sessions, but only limited experience of facilitating developmental learning	Consolidated experience of facilitating developmental learning within sessions eg identifying learning objectives, planning and delivering progression, enabling reflection and transfer of learning	Consolidated experience of facilitating group and/or individual learning throughout whole programmes, including managing unmotivated behaviour	Responsibility for training and developing practice of other practitioners across the region Creates conditions and opportunities for others to develop	Outstanding national contribution to developing practitioner excellence and disseminating good practice, and/or sustained connections with other fields to bring in good practice from elsewhere