



**BENDIGO COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION**

**Submission for Accreditation of**  
**BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE**  
**[OUTDOOR EDUCATION]**

**August 1983**

2. DETAILS OF COURSE

## 2.1 RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF COURSE

The proposed Bachelor of Applied Science (Outdoor Education) course will be the first of its type offered in Australia and is therefore likely to attract considerable interest and attention. Obviously such a course will be unique for Australia, in that for the first time at this level, outdoor education will be offered, and studied from within the Australian cultural context. In essence, this course provides both a lead for outdoor education in Australia, and a reflection of the emerging roles of outdoor education and outdoor recreation in Australian society.

### (a) Outdoor education defined

Outdoor education is "education in the outdoors, about the outdoors and for the use, understanding and appreciation of the outdoors". It should be noted that the word 'outdoors' could be used interchangeably with 'natural environments'. Natural environments is a much more accurate specification of the focus of this degree course. The definition offered requires some progressive elaboration in that it denotes a location, subject matter, a process and a reason. It follows that 'in the outdoors' signifies the location of outdoor education and operates under the premise of "... that which can best be learned out-of-doors through direct experience, dealing with native materials and life situations, should there be learned" (Sharp, in Ford, 1981, p.4).

'About the outdoors' signifies the subject matter of outdoor education, specifically that body of knowledge contained within the Natural Sciences which is appropriate to the nature of outdoor education.

'For the use, understanding and appreciation of the outdoors' signifies a number of process concerns. 'For the use' implies the mobility skills necessary for travel and experiential learning in the outdoors. Such mobility skills include bushwalking, skiing, canoeing and numerous other activities commonly known as outdoor pursuits. 'For the understanding and appreciation' implies fundamental reasons of outdoor education which can briefly be summarised as

- a) the importance of natural environments to outdoor recreation, not only to satisfy the physical outlet of recreation in natural environments, but also for the psychological benefits offered by the aesthetic qualities of natural environments
- b) the preservation of natural environments in Australia which are a unique, cultural heritage.

Implicit in both reasons offered above is the need for the development of an environmental ethic, specifically one of stewardship, hence a reason.

Having explained each component of the definition, the final point which needs to be made is that each component is interdependent with the others. The distinctiveness of outdoor education lies in the quality of being a blend of a location, subject matter, a process and a reason.

*very important*

(b) Arriving at a definition of outdoor education within the Australian context

A brief explanation of the historical development of outdoor education in Australia, and elaboration of recent trends in outdoor recreation participation is necessary to explain the appropriateness of this definition of outdoor education.

Generally, the term outdoor education has been loosely used, often emphasizing in and for the use of the outdoors particularly in practical program applications. Outdoor education programs, however, have ranged from expeditionary, challenging skills-oriented ventures to simple half-hour interpretive walks in park settings. Other programs have even included clean-up campaigns in mountain areas after other outdoor recreation groups have visited a particular area.

The greatest factor contributing to the lack of consensus in Australia regarding the term outdoor education can be traced to the historical promulgation of the term. Simply speaking, the Australian context has been a melting pot for the British influence and North American developments, with the more recent introduction of terms such as 'environmental education' and 'outdoor recreation'. Essentially, the outdoor education scene has been confused, lacking clear direction and unable to reach any consensus, particularly with regard to the variety of programs which reflect the differing emphases. Juxtaposed upon this situation are a number of contemporary trends in Australian society, namely an increased awareness of leisure and the ways in which to 'use' it, and also a developing concern for the care of environments, particularly natural environments. Such contemporary trends are being incorporated into the Australian ethos, evidence being the actions of a wide range of agencies including federal governments, private initiatives, commercial interests and concerned minority groups. For example, the increased awareness of leisure and the promotion of the need to use it, has been a major undertaking of both state and federal governments. Private and commercial interests have responded quickly, and the opportunities to become involved in recreation ventures have increased rapidly. Numerous government, public and private organisations are now involved in the provision of outdoor recreation services, not only within Australia, but also in overseas countries. Federal and state governments have also responded to public demands by playing a much greater role in the preservation of natural environments. Federal governments have overruled state governments on issues of natural environment exploitation, natural areas have been nominated for World Heritage listing and a High Court battle for the preservation of a wild river area has just concluded. In the last decade, state governments have declared many more National Parks in response to public needs and demands. In short, the involvement of

Australians with the outdoors, whether it be through outdoor recreation participation or through increased concern for natural environments, is signifying a distinctive cultural flavor which needs to be addressed in the formal study of outdoor education and outdoor recreation. It would appear that this distinctive flavor regarding outdoor recreation, and hence outdoor education, is emerging within the Australian context complementary to the historical forces which so far have shaped the field of outdoor education and outdoor recreation.

By examining recent examples of outdoor education programs and courses, and comparing them with earlier programs, credence as to the emerging Australian cultural content for outdoor education should be readily understood. In the past the emphasis in Australian outdoor education has been with the 'in' and 'for the use of' propositions of the outdoor education definition. These emphases have given rise to outdoor education programs involving outdoor pursuits activities such as bushwalking, rock climbing, etc. The education components of such programs have seen an emphasis on the acquisition of skills relating to those activities. Ultimately, the independent performance of those skills at a later date and any benefits derived from participation would constitute outdoor recreation. This approach to outdoor education was inadequate in that it assumed environmental stewardship was a natural consequence of developing the mobility skills required for travel in natural environments. Ostensibly, natural environments had a utilitarian purpose. Appreciation of the natural environments arose out of using the natural environment, but understanding the natural environment basically received very little attention.

It would be accurate to say that contemporary attitudes to such programs have seen the increasing popularity of a term more appropriate to that specialised purpose, namely 'Adventure Education'. Three recent examples reveal such a trend. The Associate Diploma in Outdoor Education, offered at Bendigo College of Advanced Education, is a skills-oriented course, much the same as outlined above. Recently, an application to change the name of the course to 'Adventure Leadership', was made because the original title of the course was considered inappropriate due to its narrower and more specialised outdoor pursuit skill oriented scope. Although the application to change the title was rejected due to other considerations, it is recognised that adventure education forms a part of the greater whole of outdoor education.

The "Report of the Committee to Study the Alternatives in Outdoor Education" set up by the Curriculum Council for the Education Department of Victoria (1981) includes both environmental education and adventure education within its definition of outdoor education.

An observation emerging from the Victorian Outdoor Education Association Conference held in November 1982 and reported in that association's newsletter was

"the recurring reference to the underlying but close relationship between outdoor education and environmental education and the need to recognize that outdoor education is much broader in scope than maybe has generally been accepted". (p.13)

Past programs offered in Australia which have emphasized the "about the outdoors and for understanding the outdoors" have generally been seen in the nature study, conservation education and more recently, environmental education or science contexts. In addition to the inclusion of environmental education in the definition of outdoor education as specified by the Victorian Outdoor Education Association and the Education Department (see above), the case of Chisholm Institute (Frankston) is worth noting.

This course which has been running for several years, pursues an integration theme. The integration theme includes a greater emphasis on the 'about the outdoors and for understanding the outdoors', with subjects such as Environmental Education, Techniques of Assessing the Environment and Integrated Field Studies. Presumably, the course has been titled Outdoor Studies because of a perceived restrictiveness of the traditional use of the term outdoor education.

'Appreciation of the outdoors' has been included within the definition to be used because of its action connotation, and is therefore a specific outcome of the emerging Australian cultural context regarding attitudes to natural environments which were previously alluded to.

N.B. The definition of outdoor education would not be complete unless some conative component was implied. For the purposes of this course, 'appreciation' implies both aesthetic and action involvement, which was indicated at the outset of this part of the submission.

Whilst it is appropriate to arrive at a definition based on contemporary trends in Australia, the literal meaning of what it is to be outdoor educated should not be lost from consideration. Therein lies the strongest argument for using the broadest definition, encompassing a location, subject matter, a process and a reason.

One final point should also be made, not to confuse the issue but to state clearly the position of this course. While the preceding discussion has indicated that environmental education (i.e. about the outdoors and for understanding the outdoors) will be included in the definition of outdoor education, it is suggested that the reverse should hold - that outdoor education is a part of environmental education. Confusion also surrounds the term environmental education, the common usage being closely linked to the environmental study, interpretation and identification mode. Virtually no consideration is given to the issues-approach of environmental education which incorporates problem-solving, decision-making and action, but again this College's stance is that the definition of environmental education will eventually move to a broader concept,

involving environmental issues as diverse as the 'desertification' problem. Hence, the broader concept of environmental education is not completely appropriate to the charter of this degree.

This course will investigate many issues, typically those issues related to outdoor education, outdoor recreation and natural environments, which will involve experience in, theory of, problem-solving and decision-making. The proposed structure of the course does allow for considerable emphasis to be placed on the more traditional definition of environmental education involving identification, interpretation and study as related to the natural sciences.

To conclude this part of the submission, a definition of outdoor education has been arrived at, and which will form the basis of the direction of the proposed degree course in outdoor education. This definition is based upon the contribution of the historical forces which have formed the field, but more significantly is now being shaped by an emerging, distinctive Australian cultural context regarding attitudes to, and behaviour in natural environments. It would be remiss if the first degree course in outdoor education in Australia did not reflect that trend, nor play a leading role in perpetuating it.

(c) Outdoor education as a body of knowledge and practice

The uniqueness of outdoor education lies in its focus on the natural environment, of which the implications for outdoor education being a body of knowledge and practice are significant. Mention has already been made of the fact that outdoor education is distinctive because of its being a blend of location, subject matter, process and reason, but this requires further elaboration.

There are four major and interrelated aspects of outdoor education which together signify the distinctive blend.

1. Being equipped with the mobility skills which enhance the use of, and appreciation of natural environments i.e. the more traditional scope of outdoor education, mainly outdoor pursuits.
2. Having the knowledge (and eventually the interpretive skills) which enhance the understanding and appreciation of the natural environment i.e. the nature study, traditional environmental education approach.

These two points align themselves with being the subject matter of outdoor education, obviously taking place in the outdoor location, and which lead to the process and reason of outdoor education.

3. Outdoor education is a process in itself in that not only is the subject matter of outdoor education learned and developed, but more intangible concerns such as self-realisation, interrelationships, responsibility, pride, experiential satisfaction, awareness, contemplation,

removal, reflection and, enjoyment, are likely consequences of the outdoor experience.

4. Furthering the idea of aesthetics arising from the process of outdoor education is the reason of outdoor education, i.e. the sense of environmental stewardship demanded to preserve those aesthetic dimensions, particularly as has been seen within the Australian societal context.

Outdoor education, when considering the inclusion of the traditional nature study or environmental education subject matter, includes an interdisciplinary base, specifically the natural biological and geological sciences. To suit the needs of outdoor education, that is, understanding and appreciating the natural environment while being mobile, requires interpretation skills. The ability to interpret and impart factual natural science information to others, often through a conceptual translation, is an added dimension to the distinctiveness of outdoor education.

N.B. { One major assumption underpinning the notion of outdoor education and outdoor recreation is that it cannot be seen in isolation from society. Outdoor recreation is one aspect of personal behaviour which affects and is affected by physical, psychological, social, economical and political considerations. Having stated this assumption, there is also the need to draw on those social sciences which elaborate on the social, economical and political considerations inherent within outdoor recreation participation. Only in this manner, can outdoor education operate and be seen in its proper perspective.

N.B. A major theme contained within this rationale has been the development of outdoor education and outdoor recreation within the Australian cultural context. Of significance, has been the contribution to the field made by the joining of practice and theory, something which would not have occurred had practice been seen in polarization from theory, as is often the case. This rationale has gone to great lengths to highlight the historical contribution of traditional approaches to outdoor education, nature study, etc. with the cultural trends regarding outdoor education, outdoor recreation participation, and the growing concern of Australian individuals and governments regarding the natural environment. In other words, the relative contributions of theory and practice have had a major bearing on the development of the definition of outdoor education upon which this course is based. At the outset of the rationale, a statement regarding the close relationship between theory and practice was made, and is worth reflecting on - that this course (academic theory and practice) will provide both a lead ... and is a reflection of the emerging roles (practice in society) of outdoor education and outdoor recreation. This first degree course in outdoor education will attempt to preserve that distinctive feature, which has contributed so much to the development of outdoor education and outdoor recreation in Australian society.



In summary, in its own right as a location, subject matter, process and reason, outdoor education is unique. The distinctiveness of outdoor education is enhanced even further when considering the requirement of an interdisciplinary base, involving the input of the social sciences, the knowledge of and translation of the natural sciences, as well as the contribution of the theory/practice nexus to the development of outdoor education and outdoor recreation in Australia. Because of the uniqueness of outdoor education as has been explained, and bearing in mind the added dimension of the natural science base, allegations of spurious distinctions between outdoor education, leisure studies and in particular, physical education should be put to rest. Outdoor education is a unique and distinctive body of knowledge and practice.

(d) A Brief overview of the state of outdoor education and outdoor recreation in Australia

During the past decade, outdoor recreation participation has increased significantly, as has the availability of services catering for the increased demand for outdoor education and outdoor recreation. While it is difficult to predict trends in the next ten years, particularly with regard to the current economic climate, Mercer (1981) has identified trends up to 1985 for outdoor recreation participation. These projections indicate a growth rate in selected activities of between 2% for bushwalking and 14% for camping. Skiing is rated at 9% growth. Presumably most other outdoor recreation activities would show similar growths within that range. Consideration should also be given to the expanding numbers of commercial agencies involved in either supplying outdoor equipment for the increased demand, or the plethora of commercial operators and programs offering package outdoor recreation ventures. Another notion worthy of consideration is the increasing number, and often conflicting demands being placed by different user groups on those natural environments designated for outdoor recreation.

The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation (1980) publishes a directory of Youth and Family Camps in Victoria which lists two hundred and fifty-four camps or establishments which provide outdoor education or outdoor recreation opportunities. Numerous other non-teaching outdoor education and outdoor recreation opportunities exist in Victoria ranging from organisations such as the Gould League, Scouts and similar groups, outdoor clubs, service organizations (e.g. Lions Club, Rotary), and church groups through to government department programs (e.g. Youth, Sport and Recreation, National Parks, etc.).

In the teaching area, a wide variety of outdoor education and recreation opportunities are becoming available. In 1983, Outdoor Education was offered as an H.S.C. Group 2 subject for the first time. Undoubtedly, this educational initiative was partially attributable to the increasing number of schools which had been offering camping, outdoor education and outdoor recreation programs on an informal basis.

Numerous schools, particularly the independent schools, and also a growing number of state secondary and primary schools, either own or lease facilities in a natural setting. Outdoor education and outdoor recreation activities form major parts of the programs offered at these facilities, as well as the function of using the facility as an outdoor laboratory for classroom extension purposes (which many people argue is legitimate outdoor education).

Further mention should be made of outdoor education in primary schools. The value of introducing young children to the outdoors at an early age has become an increasing concern of teachers in primary schools, not only in recognition of the need to prepare children for leisure (through outdoor activities) but also for the intrinsic benefits associated with outdoor education - direct learning experiences, play and experimentation and the encouragement of social skills. Whilst statistics do not exist to support it, it seems that the number of camping and outdoor education opportunities in primary schools should not be underestimated.

The implications of children being introduced to outdoor activities and developing an appreciation of the natural environment in their formative years are twofold. In future years, a degree course in outdoor education would satisfy the increasing numbers of students who have developed interests and skills in outdoor education during their primary and secondary schooling, and who would like to pursue professional preparation in this field. Secondly, the greater the number of people affected by their schooling and wishing to pursue developed interests (not professionally) in the outdoors (i.e. for recreation), the greater the demand for trained and skilled service delivery in outdoor education, or leadership in outdoor recreation to cater for that demand.

Justification for highly qualified outdoor educators should also be considered at a more philosophical level. Whilst this submission will not dwell on the variety of philosophical statements and beliefs regarding the man/natural environment relationships, some major points deserve attention for the purposes of this rationale. The winner of the 1969 Pulitzer Prize, microbiologist René Dubos (1968) talks of 'man's umbilical to earth', basically maintaining that our genetic endowment has changed very little from that which governed the lives of ancient man. Dubos maintains that physiologically and psychologically, contemporary man's needs are in tune with those of our forefathers; and that the role of natural environments is integral to satisfying that need. Contemporary Australians, Boyden and Diesendorff (1976) and Prosser (1980) forward theses of preventive medicine and problems of societal maladjustment as arguments supporting the need for a 'return to nature and to our roots'. Other writings include the consequences and implications for society, of a populace that has been out of touch with natural environments for long periods. Possibly the realities of the preceding sentence are now coming to fruition in a society desperately aware of, and plagued by the variety of social problems typically found in the greater urban areas.

This brief overview of the state of outdoor education in Australia has attempted to provide some insight into trends, both pragmatic and philosophical, which would lend support to the establishment of a degree course in outdoor education. As will be seen shortly, the expansion of opportunities in outdoor education and outdoor recreation is only being provided for formally, in a narrow, specialised but limited manner.

(e) The State of Pre-Service Preparation in Outdoor Education in Victoria

Despite the wide variety, numerous opportunities and large number of programs and facilities catering for outdoor education and outdoor recreation, the avenues for formal preparation of personnel to assume the delivery of such services is minimal. In Australia, there are three graduate diploma courses in outdoor education or outdoor studies, of which only one is available in Victoria. The only undergraduate course available in Victoria is the Associate Diploma in Outdoor Education offered at Bendigo College of Advanced Education. The highly specialised nature of that course (i.e. adventure leadership) is also a limitation when considering its sole role in providing qualified people for the outdoor education and recreation field in Victoria. With an intake of only twenty students per year, the present course cannot hope to provide sufficient graduates for the variety of potential opportunities in the broader field of outdoor education and recreation. In itself, the Associate Diploma in Outdoor Education is not a teaching qualification and does not satisfy that market. Most graduates from this course find jobs as part-time outdoor pursuits skills instructors in private schools or pursue further studies, often abroad. Some graduates have found jobs as leaders with commercial outdoor recreation agencies. The number of applications for admission to the course (average 350 each year) obviously indicates the popularity and quality of the course, but also indicates the inability of this college (or others) to cater for such a demand. Presumably a degree course in outdoor education would provide access to a wider variety of employment opportunities, (i.e. with government departments, secondary schools), possibly create its own market, and should also be extremely popular. It would also ensure that those positions becoming available in the field of outdoor education and outdoor recreation would not be filled by persons ill-equipped or poorly qualified in the field of outdoor education. This situation has been an obvious and constant problem, and needs to be remedied. As the degree course in outdoor education will be providing leaders and teachers of outdoor education, and ultimately planners and managers, it is important that such people be trained in outdoor education.

Concern is expressed at other qualifications, essentially of a pre-service nature containing some outdoor skills development as part of another qualification (usually Physical Education or Recreation). In the past, such superficial experiences, have inherently qualified graduates of those courses to assume leadership and teaching positions in outdoor education and outdoor recreation. This submission includes a proposed three years of technical outdoor

pursuit skills development and experience facilitated by highly skilled, experienced and qualified outdoor instructors. Also included, of course, is the additional blend of the natural and social sciences. A fourth year of experience (which could be monitored) would be a natural outcome for those electing to complete a teaching qualification.

One other aspect of concern for existing qualifications is that of the role of short courses and commercial accrediting agencies. This concern becomes greater in the case of formal preparation of qualified outdoor pursuit leaders. These courses, including proficiency testing, are often technical skills oriented only, and therefore appropriate in very limited and narrow practical circumstances. Such courses, and proficiency certificates should be seen only as the tip of the iceberg or the apex of technical outdoor skill development, and should therefore be placed in a realistic and proper perspective.

The role of short courses and the place of accrediting (i.e. certification) agencies in outdoor education is possibly more contentious than it is for other aspects of professional preparation in leisure and recreation. This arises because of the importance placed on experience and judgement in hazardous outdoor situations as well as having technical outdoor pursuit skills. In addition, the ability to foster an enjoyable and meaningful outdoor experience should not be underestimated when addressing the qualities of a skilled outdoor leader. Short courses and proficiency certificates cannot hope to fulfill that charter.

One final comment regarding the state of preparation for outdoor education in Victoria is that of recognition of the role already played by the skilled and experienced, but essentially unqualified persons already in the field. Notwithstanding their important contributions, the field of outdoor education and recreation in Australia is now so well developed that graduates of a degree course can only add to this field, making it both broader and more dynamic.

In summary, there are opportunities for qualified and skilled people in outdoor recreation, not only in the field of outdoor pursuit leadership but also to the broader concept of the field, particularly that which emphasizes the education part of outdoor education. Opportunities are opening up in the teaching sector both at a primary and secondary level, and will continue to do so as outdoor education becomes a more formal part of the school curriculum, particularly with H.S.C. Outdoor Education now operating, and which will eventually filter through to the junior levels of secondary teaching. Undoubtedly the need for qualified teachers of outdoor education should show a corresponding increase. Many of those people currently entering the field of outdoor education and outdoor recreation do not have the preparation, experience and skills conducive to ensuring high quality, enjoyable, safe, well rounded and meaningful outdoor education programs. This situation is undesirable, particularly in view of the legal implications of unqualified and inexperienced leaders/teachers being responsible for children and other client groups in potentially dangerous situations.

(f) Employment opportunities in outdoor education and outdoor recreation in Victoria

It is acknowledged that there are a number of factors which inhibit a clear understanding of employment opportunities in the field of recreation, including outdoor recreation (Report of Advisory Committee to V.P.S.E.C., 1983, p.18). An accurate specification of employment opportunities for graduates of the Bachelor of Applied Science (Outdoor Education) is therefore a difficult task. Perhaps the only employment yardstick, is that of the current two year Associate Diploma in Outdoor Education, although as it is a two year qualification, constraints are placed on employment prospects. Hence, it should be seen as an indicator only. Generally, employment has been found within the private school system as outdoor skills instructors. Other diplomates have been able to find positions as leaders/instructors with commercial outdoor recreation agencies although this has often been of an itinerant nature only. Permanent jobs in related fields have been obtained within the adventure travel/tourism industry and also outdoor equipment retailers. A number of students have pursued additional qualifications, either in Australia or overseas so as to enhance their employment prospects with government education departments. Staff of the Department of Physical Education and Recreation at Bendigo College of Advanced Education, have been happy with the employment of diplomates in the field, bearing in mind the restricted nature of a two year qualification.

A survey of private camps and commercial outdoor agencies was conducted by this college in March 1983, in an attempt to clarify potential employment prospects. Both of these prospects, particularly the private camps, have expressed the need for additional qualified staff, but in the present economic climate have been unable to afford wages for new staff members. Some permanent jobs, both in the private camps sphere, and with commercial outdoor recreation agencies have been recently advertised. In discussions with some managers of outdoor recreation agencies, a keen interest has been expressed in graduates of the proposed degree course in outdoor education because of the well rounded graduate envisaged (particularly in view of the incorporation of the social and natural sciences into the course structure). Some government departments such as Youth, Sport and Recreation have also expressed interest, and are hoping that some new positions in the outdoor education and outdoor recreation field will eventuate in the future.

The greatest need for qualified outdoor educators, would appear to be in the education sector, particularly the post-primary level. With Outdoor Education now being offered as an H.S.C. Group 2 subject, and with the influence it will have on the lower levels, there is a real need for suitably prepared teachers. This statement is an assumption underpinned by the growing concern of school administrators regarding the legal ramifications of utilizing inexperienced or unqualified staff in outdoor education programs.

As the number of suitably qualified and experienced outdoor education teachers in schools at present is low, and with the trend to include outdoor education programs, a major staffing problem for the education department is suggested. In 1983, the first year of H.S.C. Outdoor Education, approximately thirteen schools offered the course. With four years from the inception of the Bachelor of Applied Science (Outdoor Education) to the first teaching graduates entering the field, it should be presumed that there should be a market in schools for suitably qualified teachers. The course is structured so as to include a minor area of emphasis which would entitle entry as a second method to a Diploma of Education. Acceptance of outdoor education as a first method, and the subsequent concern of gaining post-primary teacher registration, are hurdles which can only be tackled at a later stage, once the course has commenced.

In summary, although it is difficult to assess employment prospects accurately for graduates of this proposed degree course, it would appear that opportunities for qualified outdoor educators are already in existence, and that in the future the number of opportunities will increase.

(g) Educational Philosophy

Having devoted considerable attention to defining and clarifying outdoor education within the Australian context, and establishing a basis upon which this degree course will operate, the educational philosophy of the course can be encapsulated into a number of major concerns.

1. The importance of students developing a personal world view, contributed to by the consequences of outdoor education, namely an understanding and appreciation of the interrelationship between man and the natural environment. At an individual level, the course will attempt to develop the skills and promote the values ascribed to outdoor recreation participation namely re-creation, 'return to roots' removal, enjoyment, pride, satisfaction, experiential satisfaction, meaning, etc. from which a personal world view will develop.
2. Linking of the world view to

(a) the micro-level :-

(i) the professional endeavours of the student in the field of outdoor education i.e. to assist others towards understanding, identifying, clarifying, experiencing and reflecting on the values ascribed to outdoor recreation participation.

(ii) an ongoing clarification of the graduate's own development particularly with respect to the role of outdoor education i.e. personal professionalism

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(b) the macro-level :-

issues beyond specialisation and compartmentalisation  
Outdoor education and outdoor recreation are parts of a much greater whole involving the social, economical and political spheres of life, and should be seen in that context.

3. - The education/training dichotomy, which in this case will be treated as symbiotic, so that both the academic and the practical aspects of outdoor education and outdoor recreation are enhanced. i.e. professionalism of the field

It follows that a major consideration of this degree is to provide an educational environment conducive to an appreciation of all of these major concerns of a degree course in outdoor education. It also follows that specific allowance needs to be made to integrate the activity base, environmental subject matter, the outdoor education foundation subjects, and the person-oriented social sciences into a meaningful frame of reference (i.e. to contribute to a developing philosophy, knowledge, values and skills) which will provide the basis for the professional vocational preparation aspect of the course, and eventually personal and professional endeavours in the field.

Further to the view that this course will necessitate investigating outdoor education and recreation in the broader social, economical and political contexts, is the implication that the role of outdoor education and recreation itself will need to be critically evaluated. i.e. are current outdoor education and outdoor recreation services, which are contributing to the institutionalization of the field, attaining the goals and realising the values ascribed to outdoor education and outdoor recreation? Critical evaluations of such notions are necessary for the personal preparation and professional endeavours of students in this course. In essence, the course holds the philosophy that learning is to be problematic, with specific attention being paid to the theory/practice nexus to assist the problematic approach. An enquiry approach to learning will be stressed at the expense of passive reception of information. Of significant value for this course, therefore, is the learning arising from the combination of theory and practice, and which the implications for professional vocational preparation are considerable.

A major consequence of the above statements is that this proposed course should be viewed as another, somewhat broader and more dynamic source of specific input into the ultimate institutionalisation of outdoor education and outdoor recreation.

The major pedagogical considerations of this course, therefore, are as follows :

1. Becoming outdoor educated necessitates starting from the known (self) and progressing to the unknown (outdoor education and outdoor recreation within society). Considerable emphasis will

be placed on allowing the student to experience, identify, clarify and reflect on the role of outdoor education and outdoor recreation within a personal conceptual framework. As the course progresses, so too should the breadth of the individual's perception regarding outdoor education and recreation within the societal context. Ultimately, imminent personal and professional endeavours in the field will need to be addressed.

2. The course will be 'choreographed', aimed at identifying and accentuating the links between personal outdoor involvement, course theory, practice, society and professional endeavours. The practice of outdoor recreation participation and the field experience during the course, provides the substance upon which specific theory sequences can best be understood and reflected upon, and learning optimised.
3. Through a problematic approach being taken to course work, the blending of theory and practice, the provision of a liberal range of study option directly related to the nature of outdoor education, the experiences and learning of students should be qualitatively enhanced.

The purpose of the Bachelor of Applied Science (Outdoor Education) is to meet the needs of students seeking professional careers in leadership, planning, management and teaching in the field of outdoor education and outdoor recreation. The course will provide for an intensive study of outdoor education and outdoor recreation by analysing the foundations upon which the field is based, by investigating its past, contemporary and future operations, and by equipping students with the knowledge and skills appropriate to professional vocational endeavours in outdoor education and outdoor recreation.

#### (h) Objectives of the Course

It is anticipated that at the successful completion of the course, graduates will be well-equipped in both the theoretical and practical aspects of outdoor education and outdoor recreation. The graduate should have a sound knowledge of the natural environment and its components, considerable personal skills for use in natural environments, expertise in translating such knowledge of natural environments to the public, experience in the leading/teaching of outdoor skills, an ability to plan, administer and implement enjoyable, meaningful and safe outdoor experiences for others, as well as having further developed a personal and professional value position regarding the role of outdoor education, outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship within society.

Throughout this rationale constant mention has been made of outdoor education being a location, subject matter, a process and a reason. Particular attention has been given to outdoor education within an emerging Australian cultural context, and the contribution made to that phenomena by the blending of theory and practice. Objectives of the course will address those major concerns.



## CONTENT (SUBJECT) OBJECTIVES

### For students

1. To understand and appreciate the foundations upon which outdoor education is based, the natural and social sciences appropriate to it, and be equipped with the mobility skills necessary for enjoyable, safe and meaningful outdoor recreation.
2. To understand the value and role of outdoor education, outdoor recreation, and natural environments at a personal level, and for society.
3. To understand the variety of forces - personal, social, economical and political, which affect and are affected by outdoor education, outdoor recreation and natural environments.
4. To develop the professional knowledge and skills appropriate to fostering in others an enjoyable, safe and meaningful outdoor education/recreation experience.
5. To understand and appreciate man's place within nature, through the study of outdoor education and practice of outdoor recreation, and to play a leading role in promoting stewardship of natural environments.

### PROCESS OBJECTIVES

1. To experience or appreciate a variety of outcomes arising from outdoor recreation participation.
2. To identify, <sup>clearly</sup> critically evaluate and elaborate, on a personal and professional value position regarding the roles of outdoor education, outdoor recreation and natural environments in society.
3. To acquire and have pride in the practical skills required for enjoyable and safe movement in natural environments.
4. To empathize with the role of natural environments in society, and establish a framework for action.
5. To assist the development of outdoor education and outdoor recreation within the Australian cultural context.
6. To gain practical experience in a wide variety of outdoor pursuit locations and environmental conditions.
7. To maximise personal growth through achievement, independence, self-reliance, empathy and interpersonal cooperation.

(i) Proposed course structure : Rationale (Refer to p.24)

Having specified the definition of outdoor education and the objectives upon which this degree course will be based, the reasons for many of the subject offerings should be readily understood.

It should be recalled that

1. The proposed course and its structure is a product of a wide variety of forces, particularly the cultural evolution of outdoor education, outdoor recreation and natural environments within the Australian context, but not disregarding the earlier overseas influences.
2. The course and its structure is therefore a cultural outcome, expressing an ideology which encompasses the importance of outdoor recreation in Australian society, the relevance of outdoor education in satisfying that need, and specific values regarding the role of natural environments in Australian society.

It is imperative, therefore, that the first degree course in outdoor education in Australia, not only reflect this cultural outcome of an evolving field, but play a leading role in providing substance and direction for those students wishing to enter the course and graduate from it. Of primary importance is the balance of outdoor pursuit development and an understanding of those natural sciences most suited to the concept of outdoor education (i.e. biological and geological studies). Two other aspects of the course integral to the purpose of the degree are a strong philosophical base regarding the nature and scope of outdoor education/recreation within society, and the techniques of transferring the knowledge of natural environments and the skills of outdoor pursuits to others.

In highlighting these major course themes, elaboration is required to put the proposed degree structure into a more meaningful perspective.

1. Obviously, outdoor pursuit skills are catered for by the Outdoor Pursuit 1-6 sequence. The natural sciences are catered for by the Biology and Geology sequence of which at least one sequence is compulsory, as well as being included in the units Principles of Outdoor Education, Environmental Interpretation and Geography 1 : Man and Environment sequence.
2. Following the premise that outdoor education and outdoor recreation should not be seen in isolation from a person's recreational, social, emotional and work related life, a number of proposed units in various ways, address this interface. Such units include Social History of Leisure, Leisure and Recreation in Society, Foundations of Outdoor Education Studies and Philosophy of Recreation and Natural Environments. Typically these subjects will address major considerations such as the role of outdoor recreation in a

person's life, the interrelationships between work and leisure, the roles of leisure and recreation in society and the wide variety of conflicting social behaviours and societal circumstances affecting leisure, recreation and outdoor recreation participation.

Optional subjects such as Sociology, Social Science, Philosophy, Urban and Historical Geography, and Cultural and Political Anthropology are included so as to broaden the understanding of the social forces which affect the field of outdoor education and recreation.

3. Closely linked with the preceding point is the acquisition of a personal philosophy and basis for action relating to outdoor education, outdoor recreation and natural environments, and which operates at a number of different levels. Initially the development of such a philosophy relates in a general sense to the interface between the different but related aspects of life already mentioned in the previous point. The concept of environmental stewardship will be introduced and investigated in the Geology 1 : Man and Environment sequence in first year. The 'Foundations of Outdoor Education Studies' subject will attempt to identify and clarify the link between personal involvement in the outdoor pursuits, an understanding of the natural environment (Biology and Geology), the concept of environmental stewardship, and the formal study of the writings associated with the philosophy of outdoor recreation and natural environments which will be addressed in the 'Philosophy of Recreation and Natural Environments' subject.

The unit 'Recreation Environment and Consumer' is included for the purpose of considering the economical and political circumstances influencing outdoor education, recreation and natural environments, and is therefore a necessary addition in satisfying the aim of acquiring an educated philosophy. Contemporary Issues in Outdoor Education and Outdoor Recreation, serves the purpose of investigating those specific issues directly affecting the field of outdoor education and outdoor recreation, and hence completes the sequence relating to the acquisition of a personal philosophy and basis for action - the sequence being experience, theory, philosophy, issues and action.

4. A fourth consideration relates to the translation or transfer skills required for the vocational training aspects of outdoor education and recreation, specifically those identified in title by the words 'Principles' and 'Management', (Principles of Outdoor Leadership, Principles of Outdoor Education, Camp Management and Recreation Management in Natural Environments). Other transfer or outdoor translation subjects already mentioned (e.g. Environmental Interpretation) are also included in the

vocational training area, as of course, is the Field Experience which provides direct work experience. Within this vocational preparation will be a considerable emphasis on blending the theoretical preparation with the practical opportunities.

5. The final consideration is to provide students with unit choices which they can decide upon, depending upon individual interests and perceived vocational opportunities. Options will be made available for those students interested in pursuing careers in the administrative, management and planning areas of outdoor recreation, e.g. Accounting, Administrative Studies, Financial Planning, Communications, Social Science, Geographies, etc. Further specialisation in areas related more to leadership in outdoor education and recreation is also possible (Natural Science options), while broadening units related to outdoor education will also be offered (Anthropology, Resource Management, etc.). Within the available options is the capacity to undertake a study sequence which will provide the student with a two year minor study, thus entitling the graduate to be admitted into a Diploma of Education (Secondary) program. Teaching careers in post-primary schools then becomes a possibility.