

Maroon Outdoor Education Centre



Pedagogical
Framework

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Maroon OEC is an Education Queensland school which provides high quality outdoor education programs to students from Education Queensland schools.

As an Outdoor Education Centre Maroon OEC believes that **Outdoor Education** is:
an experiential method of learning with the emphasis of learning placed on relationships between self, others and place which takes place primarily through exposure to outdoor environments.

(adapted from Priest, 1986)

As an **Education Queensland** school Maroon OEC aligns pedagogical practices with systemic imperatives relevant to Outdoor Education and client school requests.

As the provider of outdoor education to client **schools**, Maroon OEC develops and implements curriculum and pedagogy that provide schools with programs that best meet the needs of their students.

The Pedagogical Framework at Maroon OEC focuses on changing the behaviours of students to increase their function in the Social and Emotional Learning competencies areas as identified by The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning.

An elaboration of the implementation of these Social and Emotional Learning competencies is provided in the MOEC Curriculum Framework.

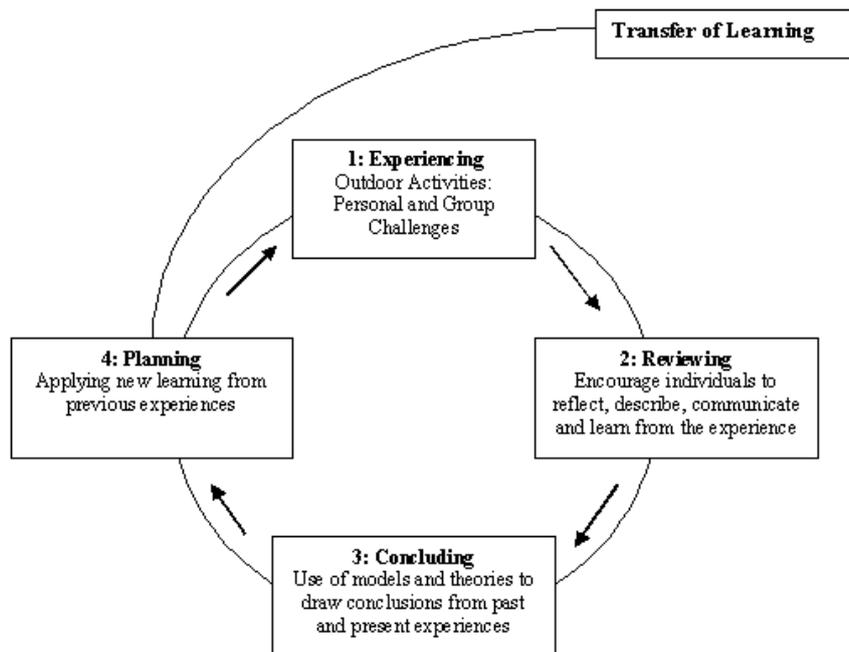
This change in student behaviour requires the following pedagogical theories and strategies:

1. Experiential Learning
2. Outdoor Adventure Programming
3. Processing and Facilitation
4. Positive, supportive and safe learning environment

Experiential Learning

Experiential education is learning through doing. It is a process through which people construct knowledge, acquire skills, change behaviours and enhance values from direct experience (Association of Experiential Education 1995).

The Maroon OEC pedagogy is based on an experiential learning approach which utilises adventurous outdoor pursuits as the vehicle for learning. This methodology is grounded in academic literature in the fields of Outdoor Education, Adventure Education and Adventure Based Learning.



The Experiential Learning Cycle (from Exeter, 2001, adapted from Kolb, 1984).

The experiential learning cycle is the foundation of Outdoor and Adventure Education. This cycle identifies the value of:

1. Sharing an experience
2. Reviewing, reflecting and learning from the experience in a deliberate manner
3. Extrapolating these learnings in to models and theories
4. Applying these models in new situations
5. Planning to transfer these models in to future situations

Experiential Learning at Maroon OEC

Experiences and Adventure supported by Reflection leading to Learning.

Get Ready	Experience	Reflect
Students will find out what they are going to do and be presented with the opportunity to learn the skills, knowledge and attitudes to engage in the experience.	Students will be challenged in outdoor activities and will have the opportunity to develop new skills and an awareness and appreciation of self, others and place.	Students will draw learning out of the experience and transfer that learning to future experiences.

The students:

Are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, spiritually and/or physically

Pose questions, investigate, experiment, solve problems, assume responsibility and are creative

Are able to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for results

The experiences:

Are carefully chosen

Are supported by reflection

Include the possibility to learn from successes, natural consequences and mistakes

The teacher:

Recognises and encourages spontaneous opportunities for learning

Uses fun and enjoyment to engage students

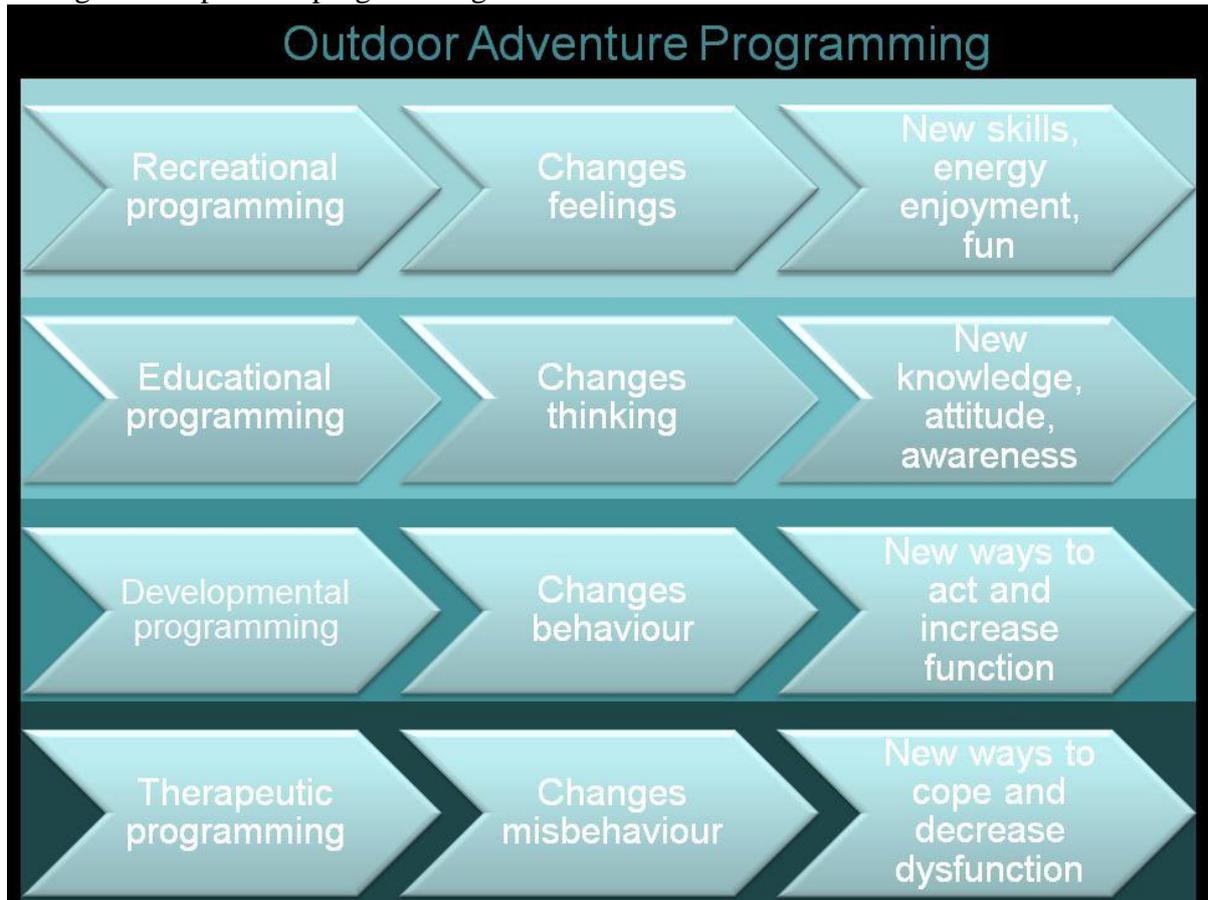
Develops and models positive relationships

Outdoor Adventure Programming

Miles and Priest (1999) identify 4 levels of adventure programming:

1. Recreational
2. Educational
3. Developmental
4. Therapeutic

The focus of Maroon OEC curriculum and pedagogy is to increase student function in the Social and Emotional Learning competencies. This behaviour change is achieved, in part, through developmental programming.



The implementation of effective outdoor education pedagogy at Maroon OEC begins with the design of an appropriate developmental program sequence:

1. Each program is negotiated collaboratively with a teacher from the school to best meet the needs of the students.
2. A unique learning sequence is developed for each group to allow for the establishment of a supportive learning environment.
3. The learning sequence allows the Maroon OEC teacher to assess the capabilities of each student to successfully participate in the program.
4. The Maroon OEC teacher will adjust the learning sequence, learning experiences and teaching styles to ensure successful and safe participation of all students.

Facilitation and Processing

Facilitation covers everything the teacher does before, during and after the learning experience to enhance each student's learning and positive behavioural change. (Priest, Gass, and Gillis 2000)

Effective facilitation is central to pedagogical practice at Maroon OEC. The ability to apply the following theories and strategies is imperative:

1. Group Development Theory
2. Outdoor Leadership Theory
3. Processing the Adventure Experience

Group development theory explains the stages a group moves through from “forming” to “adjourning”. Interpretation of this theory informs the selection and sequence of learning experiences and the teaching and facilitation strategies that are best suited at different stages of the program and group development.

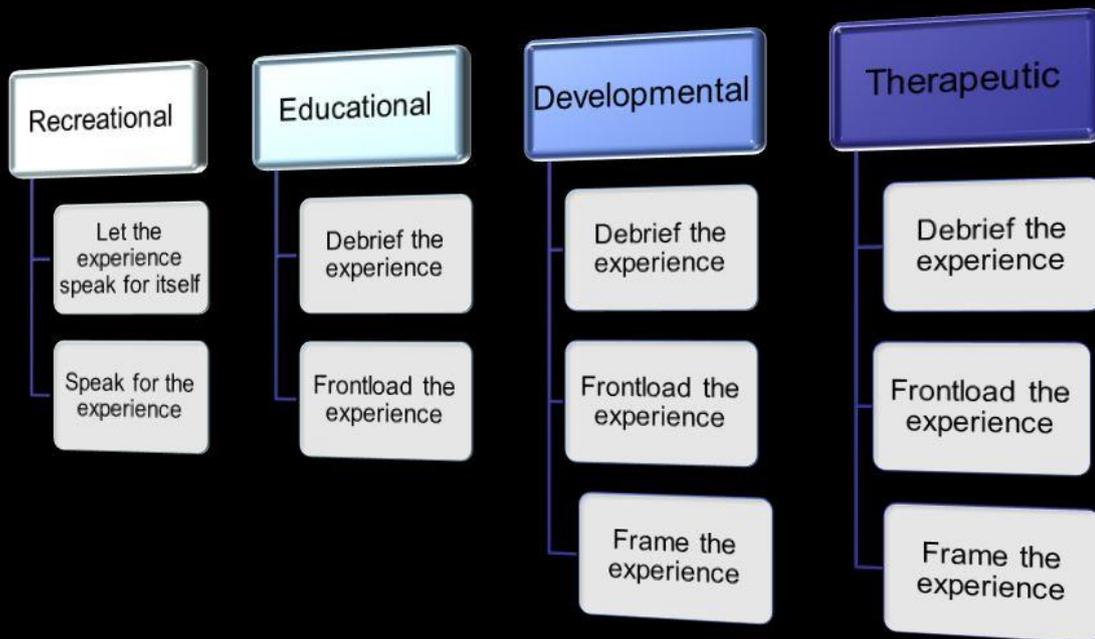
Outdoor leadership theories identify the competencies an outdoor educator should possess: outdoor pursuit skills; instructional teaching skills; and decision making and judgement skills. Mastery of these skills enables teachers to provide high quality, safe teaching in adventure activities to a wide range of student ability levels.

Processing is an activity that is structured to encourage students to plan, reflect, describe, analyse and communicate about experiences. (Gass 1993; Knapp 1990; Quniland & Van Ginkel 1984; Nadler & Luckner 1992). Processing can occur before, during or after an experience. Processing activities can be used to:

1. Help students focus before an experience
2. Facilitate awareness or promote change during an experience
3. Reflect, describe, analyse or discuss after an experience
4. Promote transfer and integration of new learning into student's lives after an experience is completed

There is a significant relationship between the facilitation style and the type of adventure program. To achieve the behavioural change expected in developmental adventure programs a higher level of processing is required to engage students, stimulate higher level thinking and elicit deeper reflection.

Facilitation Styles in Program Types



Stages of Facilitation and Processing

Let the experience speak for itself	Have a good time – make your own meaning
Speak for the experience	Tell the students what they have learnt and what they can improve
Debrief the experience	Reflect on experience with open group discussion through designed questions
Frontload the experience	Key learning points are given before the experience; debrief success or failure of key points
Frame the experience	Use of metaphors to mirror image reality

Positive, supportive and safe learning environment

The creation of a positive, supportive and safe learning environment in an outdoor education program is paramount to student learning and development. The pedagogical skills required to achieve are derived from the following strategies:

1. Developing a Group Working Agreement
2. Challenge of Choice
3. Utilising Risk for Education

The establishment of a physically and emotional safe group can be achieved through the development of a group working agreement. The negotiation of group norms or rules allows students to have input in to the way the group will function during the program to achieve their desired learning. This process creates an environment that allows students to participate to their potential.

Challenge of choice allows students to choose the challenge level that supports the optimal learning of each individual. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves and to make informed personal decisions. They are then supported in their decision to achieve or surpass their goal.

The word “adventure” usually refers to an undertaking that involves danger or risk. Adventure Education utilises perceived and real risk to engage students in physically and emotionally challenging experiences. It is through exposure to risk that students are able to experience the true nature of their behaviour. It is this personal, emotional engagement that is the catalyst for effective processing and effecting positive changes in behaviour.

Senior Schooling and QCE support - Vocational Education & Training courses

Maroon OEC provides support to state high schools to enhance the delivery of senior schooling programs incorporating VET qualifications and units of competency. This support enables schools to better provide for a larger range of individualised learning options identified on SET plans through offering VET programs for QCE credit. Maroon OEC is registered with the QCAA for the delivery of the Certificate II in Outdoor Recreation to Queensland Senior Students.

Teaching these programs requires teachers to have a clear understanding of what the students need to learn as prescribed by the units of work as well as a clear understanding of what skills the students already have.

The competency based model of the Vocational Education & Training courses requires a differentiated pedagogical approach be employed. This approach includes the utilisation of aspects of experiential learning to engage students in learning from experience and reflection on their learning and a more direct approach which includes the demonstration of skills, provides guided student practice time and assesses student demonstrations of learning.

The pedagogical approach is best reflected by the following:

- What do my students already know?
- What do they need to learn?
- How do I teach it?
- How will they demonstrate their learning?
- How will I know how well my students have learned it?
- Where to next?

Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (Education Queensland 2010)

Differentiated Teaching at Maroon OEC

The intent of providing differentiation in teaching practices is to have all students participating in respectful work - work that is challenging, meaningful and engaging.

What is differentiated instruction?

'Differentiated instruction refers to teaching that is adapted to take into account the range of individual differences and needs of students in any one classroom. It comprises modifications to the curriculum, teaching structures, and teaching practices in combination to ensure that instruction is relevant, flexible, and responsive, leading to successful achievement, and the development of students as self-regulated learners alongside their peers' ([van Kraayenoord 1997](#)).

Specifically, differentiated instruction is:

- Proactive
- More qualitative than quantitative
- Aimed at offering multiple approaches to content, process, and product
- Student-centred
- A blend of whole-class, group, and individual instruction

<https://learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources/file/a36d2ed5-9882-dc3b-af37-92e9d2b7fbe4/1/01483a.html>

Differentiation in Practice at Maroon OEC

Planning

Each program:

- Is developed with a clear focus on student learning
- Is developed collaboratively between the visiting school and Maroon OEC coordinator
- Is uniquely designed for each school to meet the learning outcomes and the needs of the students
- Has deliberate group selection strategies to meet the needs of students
- Has a unique learning sequence for each group

Examples:

- A group will include a student with a physical disability. The MOEC coordinator will develop a program for that group to ensure the activities and venues are appropriate for all students.
- The visiting teacher informs the MOEC coordinator that one group of students will be formed as a gifted and talented group. The MOEC coordinator investigates the nature of the students' capabilities and the program offered by the school. A specific sequence of learning experiences is developed for this group to cater for their abilities and focussing on them communicating their ideas and cooperating with each other.

Learning

- The learning focus for each program is selected by a visiting school; articulated by Maroon OEC; implemented in cooperation
- The learning focus for each group is adjusted as the program progresses to meet the needs of the group and individuals
- The core learnings of Maroon OEC programs focus on hands-on experiences with real life content predominantly in the social and emotional learning domain

Examples:

- A group in a program designed to focus on Teamwork is demonstrating a low level of communication. The MOEC teacher narrows the focus of the learning on listening and speaking clearly.
- A student in a Year 10 program focussing on Teamwork is demonstrating great leadership capabilities. The MOEC teacher provides feedback to this student about their capability. The student is challenged to adopt and develop leadership skills with opportunities and support from the MOEC teacher.

Teaching

- The introduction session to each program is designed to provide teachers with the opportunity to assess student capabilities.
- Maroon OEC teachers adjust the program sequence to address the needs of the students and the group
- Maroon OEC teachers modify learning experiences to suit the needs of the students
- Teaching focuses on the development of a supportive learning environment, implementing strategies such as Working Agreements and Challenge of Choice, to provide students with a framework to have input, make choices and participate beyond their perceived potential

Examples:

- A student with ASD attends a MOEC program. The MOEC teacher provides an iPad for the student to allow them to navigate the group around the centre and to photograph the group at specified activities.
- A student is identified as a non-swimmer in the student information collected prior to the program. The MOEC teacher will use a specially designed PFD for this student. They may choose to tie all of the canoes in to pairs to reduce the risk of capsizing and reduce the concerns of the student and strategically place the visiting teacher to monitor the students comfort and safety.

References

Luckner, J.L. & Nadler, R.S. (1997) *Processing the Adventure Experience*

Miles, J.C. & Priest, S. (1990) *Adventure Education*

Prouty, D., Panicucci, J. and Collinson, R. (2007) *Adventure Education: Theory and Applications*

Stremba, B. & Bisson, C.A. (2009) *Teaching Adventure Education Theory*

Hattie, J 2009, *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Metaanalyses Relating to Achievement*, Routledge, London.

Supporting Internal Policies and Documents

MOEC Curriculum Framework

MOEC Teacher Induction Program

MOEC Teacher Competency Record

MOEC Coordination Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)

MOEC General Teaching SOP's

MOEC Programming SOP's

Grouping Students Policy

School Coordinator's Checklist

Bushwalking and Campout Guide

MOEC Curriculum Activity SOP's

MOEC Guide to planning for medical conditions