



Outdoor Instructor Training Program (OITP)

How do I become an Outdoor Instructor at Outward Bound Hong Kong (OBHK)?

Outward Bound Hong Kong (OBHK) provides two pathways to enter employment as an Outdoor Instructor at the school. They are the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and the Outdoor Instructor Training Program (OITP). This document will explain what the OITP is, and what is required to gain employment after completion of the program.

The first step in the process is to get accepted into the OITP. After we receive your CV and OBHK application, we will begin to review your materials and check your references. This is followed by walk-in interviews for you to receive more information. We will decide on suitable candidates for an intensive two day and overnight evaluation in a group setting. Following the evaluation, the outstanding candidates will be offered placement in the OITP.

Why do we have the Outdoor Instructor Training Program (OITP)?

The OITP was created to recruit and train potential Outdoor Instructors from Hong Kong that are new to the Outdoor Adventure Education (OAE) industry. Outward Bound is one of the oldest and notable OAE organisations not only in Hong Kong and Asia, but the world. Therefore, OBHK wants to ensure that the Outdoor Instructors we employ are to a high standard. The OITP is designed to be a competitive and selective professional development program. This means that it is an intermediate stage to be offered employment at OBHK as an Outdoor Instructor. It is usually called the Training School.

What are the specifics of the OITP?

The OITP is set up as a 100-day program that includes an Instructor Development Course, activity and skill specific trainings, and guided work place experience. Depending upon the programming needs at OBHK, there can be up to 15 scheduled off days during the OITP. The breakdown of the hundred contact day OITP is below:

- Instructor Development Course – 14 days
- Trainings and Evaluations – 64 days
- Work Place Experience – 22 days

The start and finish time for each day will be different depending upon the training or work place experience. Some days may be up to twelve hours, and they may occur consecutively. There will be trainings that involve camping out for several days, and they may be in locations with limited to no access to communication. Every morning of the OITP will include Physical Training (PT) sessions. If the OITP trainees are at the Tai Mong Tsai or Wong Wan Chau base, then it will commence at 06:15AM until 07:30AM. The PT sessions will switch from swimming, jogging, climbing, kayaking, and yoga.

The OITP is designed to prepare trainees for the OAE industry, however a large emphasis will be placed on the specifics of working at OBHK. This means that trainees should expect to work long hours, often starting early in the morning and continuing into the evenings. During OBHK courses that are expedition based, our Outdoor Instructors are technically working 24 hours a day. For courses that are Centre based, the working hours generally range from 07:00AM to 08:30PM



The off days will be interspersed throughout the OITP. Their purpose is to allow trainees time to consolidate the technical skills, review the educational theory, and provide opportunities for rest. If trainees require off days to take care of personal needs, they must inform OBHK as soon as possible. The missed days of the OITP may need to be completed during the trainee's personal time. It is rare that trainees need to request additional days for personal needs, and the outcome will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The trainee will receive a stipend of \$100 HKD per day for a maximum of \$10,000 HKD for the 100-day OITP. The purpose of the stipend is to assist with costs from transportation, personal outdoor equipment and clothing, and the development of professional resources. The stipend is provided for the days that the trainee is present during the OITP. If the trainee is not present due to illness, injury, or other reasons they will not receive the stipend during those days. During the OITP all meals and housing will be provided by OBHK. Meals will only be covered during the training days. The housing is a shared dormitory with an attached kitchenette and washroom.

During the OITP, all technical equipment will be provided by OBHK. This means items such as buoyancy aids, sea kayaks, climbing gear, etc. Trainees must provide themselves with suitable outdoor clothing such as rain gear and proper footwear for the variety of activities that are conducted at OBHK.

What is expected of me?

The OITP is designed to be rigorous and challenging. A high level of commitment, motivation, and self-discipline are necessary to complete the program. Many of the technical skills will need to be practiced on your own time and using yourself as the coach. This process does not stop after the OITP either, but it will continue throughout your career as an Outdoor Instructor. The educational knowledge will also be the same. You should think of it as ongoing development for yourself.

Throughout the OITP, your placement is based upon your performance. What this means is that you need to ensure that you are meeting or exceeding the set standards. There is ongoing evaluation and assessment during the OITP. If you are not able to meet the standard and continue to perform at it, you may lose your placement.

The OITP will be physically, emotionally, and mentally difficult. Be prepared to get dirty, wet, slightly sun burnt, scrapes, sore muscles, and the list goes on...These are a constant for Outdoor Instructors. A big part of the OITP is to learn how to manage these not only for yourself, but the students you may eventually be in charge of.

The OITP will be conducted in English both orally and written. After becoming an Outdoor Instructor at OBHK, you may be working on courses in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, or a combination of them. Due to the international environment at OBHK all formal communications at the school are conducted in English.

What happens after the OITP?

Trainees that successfully complete the OITP may be offered a 3-year Outdoor Instructor contract at OBHK. A contract is not guaranteed for all graduates due to our staffing needs, however it rarely occurs that a graduate is not offered a position. During the three year contract, the additional trainings, pay scales, and promotions are all outlined in the OBHK Career Pathways document.



What happens if do not finish or choose to opt out?

The OITP stipend contains the following conditions:

- I. If an Outdoor Instructor Training Program graduate terminates an Outdoor Instructor employment contract with Outward Bound Hong Kong within the first 18 months, they must repay the entire amount of the received stipend.
- II. If an Outdoor Instructor Training Program graduate terminates an Outdoor Instructor employment contract with Outward Bound Hong Kong after 18 months but not more than then the first contract length, they must repay 50% of the received stipend.
- III. Outdoor Instructor Training Program trainees who withdraw from the OITP must repay the entire amount of the received stipend.
- IV. Graduates of the Outdoor Instructor Training Program who decline an Outdoor Instructor employment contract from Outward Bound Hong Kong must repay the entire amount of the received stipend.

OITP Check List:

The items below need to be completed as soon as possible or by the end of the OITP:

- Valid First-Aid Certificate or higher
- Valid Bronze Medallion Award, equivalent or higher
- Pass a Police clearance check
- Pass a thorough Medical clearance check

The OITP trainee needs to be aware of and manage the requirements below:

- Be able to live and work away from home for extended periods of time. (If you have personal commitments such as a partner, children, or relatives to look after then OBHK may be a difficult environment to work in.)
- Be able to work with and communicate effectively with a diverse group of Outdoor Instructors and students.
- OBHK is a registered NGO. Outdoor Instructor contracts provide a sufficient salary and housing to live by.

If you are able to complete and manage the requirements above then you are closer to successfully completing the OITP. Please contact myself or the Training & Development department at OBHK if you have any questions regarding the information above.

Cheers,

Alec Berry
Training Manager

Outward Bound Hong Kong
210 Tai Mong Tsai Road
Sai Kung, New Territories
Hong Kong

Fax: +852 2792 9877

Phone: +852 2792 4333 / 2791 3234

E-mail: recruitment@outwardbound.org.hk