

VENTURE UNIT

THE VENTURE SCOUT UNIT



**VENTURE
UNIT**

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**In Scouting,
a boy is encouraged
to educate himself
instead of being instructed.**

Robert Baden Powell

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The Principles

The Venture Scout Unit serves as a vehicle in which young people have the opportunity to develop themselves Socially, Physically, Intellectually, Creatively, Emotionally and Spiritually through self-government, under the guidance and leadership of Adult Leaders.

The Opportunity

The Unit facilitates the development of an active programme. Through active participation in this programme, skills in management and leadership are developed. Within this framework of participation, Adult Leaders must be ever mindful that this training is a process with different results for each individual member.

The Objectives

The objective of this Programme is to provide:

- Opportunities to develop and exercise vocational and leadership skills.
- Challenging and appealing activities that develop the Venture Scout's personal abilities enabling them to reach their fullest potential.
- Promote an understanding of, and involvement in the community at a local, national and international level.
- Young adults with an opportunity for companionship, a sense of belonging and increased self-esteem.
- An opportunity to develop a sense of democracy and justice.
- A better understanding of the world's human and physical resources.
- The opportunity to develop, express and respond to the individual's spiritual needs.

The Venture Scout Unit

SIZE OF THE VENTURE UNIT

(Taken from Updated P.O.R. as agreed during Executive Meetings)

There is no recommended minimum or maximum size for a Venture Unit, although when deciding on the size of the Unit, the leadership available must be taken into consideration.

LEADERSHIP

The operation of the Unit must be overseen by an Appointed Leader.

The Leader must plan to ensure that at least two adults (aged 18 or over) are present at the Unit meeting. At least one of the adults should hold an appointment of Section Leader.

In the event that the Section Leader is unable to attend a Unit meeting, it is possible (on occasion) for another adult with youth leadership experience from within the Group, to take their place at the meeting or similar event, as long as the Group Scout Leader is consulted and supports the arrangement.

Other than two adults being present there is no ratio of adults to Venture Scouts set for regular indoor Unit meetings, however Leaders should assess the risk and arrange for sufficient adults (aged 18 or over) to ensure a safe meeting environment for the operation of the Unit, which may vary depending on the programme being delivered.

For outdoor activities as well as camps, it is recommended that two adult Leaders are present. A Venture Unit Leader must plan to ensure that as a minimum at least two adults are present overnight. Only in the event of an emergency should an adult be alone overnight with young people.

Leaders should carry out a Risk Assessment for all Scouting activities.

**IT IS GOOD PRACTICE
TO HAVE A MIXED LEADERSHIP TEAM.**

THE VENTURE SCOUT UNIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The internal composition, organization and administration of a Venture Scout Unit are decided by an Executive Committee. This Executive Committee is elected by the Venture Scouts of the Unit, at regular intervals as may be deemed fit for that particular Unit. The size of the Committee and the method of selection will depend on the size and composition of the Unit. The Executive Committee will consist of a Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer and such other members as the Unit may decide.

The Chairperson of the Executive Committee will be a Venture Scout and the Venture Scout Leader will work closely with the youth. Regardless of the success of the internal organization of the Unit, it is the Venture Scout Leader who will always be responsible for the progress of the Unit.

“Ad hoc” teams may be formed within the Unit for each activity as and when required. The team, in this case, should have a recognized Leader who is responsible to the Executive Committee and the Venture Scout Leader for the activity concerned.

Long term plans and other important matters should be discussed by the whole Unit in full session and then final decisions should be taken by the Executive Committee and Venture Scout Leader; the latter should always keep the Group Scout Leader fully informed.

Detailed short term planning should be started by the Executive Committee in the first instance, and then continued by the group carrying out the activity. Together with the Venture Scout Leader, the Executive Committee plays an important role in implementing the training schemes, maintaining the standards of the award scheme, assisting other Sections in the Group, and performing community service. >

The function of the Unit Executive is to plan, decide and manage the:

- Programme
- Membership
- Finances
- Communications
- Award Scheme Standards
- Award Scheme Progress
- Discipline
- Traditions

For further information please refer to the booklet "The Unit Executive".

MINIMUM STANDARDS

The minimum standard for a Venture Unit is:

- Operation overseen by a Leader
- Two adults present
- The delivery of an appropriate balanced programme
- The opportunity for every Scout to attend at least three weekend camp experiences each year

Where necessary, the District Commissioner in liaison with the Training Department, is required to assist the Venture Unit to reach the minimum standards detailed above.

If a Venture Unit fails to reach the minimum standard for two consecutive years, the District Commissioner, with the approval of the Chief Commissioner, may close it. If the Unit fails to reach the minimum standard for three years in a row, it must be closed.

The Basics

The Unit is the basic grouping of Venture Scouts and it is desirable that it consists of not less than 8 members. The Association considers that a Unit of less than 8 members is not in the best interests of the Venture Scouts concerned. In such cases it would make sense to combine to Venture Units from different groups to amalgamate for working purposes until such time when the Unit in a particular group grows to the desired number.

There are a lot of ways to operate a Venture Unit. The important thing is that the method must meet the needs of all members. This means your Unit may not meet weekly or perhaps it will stop at times during the year when the school exams load gets too much. You could even run your Unit around important activities if all members were agreeable. There is no one particular way of operating a successful Venture Unit.

UNIT-IN-COUNCIL

When a Venture Unit has more than 10 members, it is imperative that from time to time it may be deemed necessary for the whole unit to get together. This may be to cast a vote, discuss a special issue that the Unit executive has been unable to resolve or to 'brainstorm' other members for programme ideas. It might be to agree to certain disciplinary standards.

This type of meeting should be held to also ascertain the wishes and commitment of members of the Unit regarding a particular activity. It is important that on such occasions all members of the Unit have a right to put their views, to ask questions and to seek answers. Someone must be elected to chair this meeting (and it can be a different person from the Chairperson itself).

UNIT EXECUTIVE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference and a Code of Conduct should be produced and regularly reviewed. An annual review will ensure the Unit members are aware of the Constitution contents and contribute to maintaining its relevance. The following are some relevant parts a constitution should have:

- Unit Objectives
- Membership and Qualifications
- Training
- Rules of Conduct

THE UNIT PROGRAMME

The average unit programme is activity-based and its overall success depends on the participation of members of the Unit. The scope of each activity area should be sufficiently broad to encompass all aspects of the venture programme.

The Benefits of Planning

There are many benefits to be gained from sound planning. These include:

- Taking an objective view of the activity as a whole, ensuring that it is in line with the Venture Programme.
- Planning combines a critical analysis of the use of resource and the needs of future events.
- the creation of objectives thus giving a sense of purpose for the activity.
- communicating information and ideas with Unit members to develop enthusiasm and team spirit.
- opportunities for guidance, direction and leadership.
- setting goals against which performance and progress of the Unit can be gauged.
- Planning, once accepted by all, becomes a commitment to action.

A Plan-Do-Review (PDR) approach should always be taken as a minimum standard of programme planning.

PLAN YOUR WORK
AND WORK YOUR PLAN.

Adult Leadership

Venture Scout Leaders and their Assistants are appointed on the recommendation of the Group Scout Leader and the District Commissioner and the appointment is issued by the Association. A Unit having mixed membership should endeavour to have at least one male and one female leader. Where, due to a change in personnel, a mixed unit does not have mixed adult leadership, every effort must be made to resume mixed leadership.

Values Statement

The aim of the Scout Association of Malta is to encourage the full development of young people (SPICES). The future of our society is vested in each successive generation and the values they inherit.

The Association recognises:

- The importance of individuals developing a sense of personal identity and self-worth, which leads to responsibility for oneself and one's actions as a citizen;
- That young people are able and willing to take responsibility and contribute to society;
- The rights and responsibility of individuals to regulate their own health;
- The importance of adults providing suitable role models for young people;
- The importance of not exposing young people to harm or exploitation;
- The importance of individuals and the community adopting a lifestyle that allows ecologically sustainable development through preventing environmental overload, degradation and resource depletion;
- The importance of respect for, and fairness in, dealing with all people, irrespective of culture, gender, religion or impairment;
- The importance of mutual support and help between members of a community;
- The importance of gainful commitment in contributing to the sense of dignity and self-worth of the individual;
- The importance of harnessing technological innovation to benefit human society.

Activities

Responsible adult participation must be arranged by Unit Leaders for those mixed activities which, in the opinion of the leaders, necessitate adult involvement. Adult participation can also be accepted from other adults depending on the activity.

GUIDELINES FOR MIXED ACTIVITIES

The following points are recommended as guidelines.

- a.** All Units should endeavour to have active male and female leaders;
- b.** Given the changing social standards, Leaders must be prepared to provide guidance and set good examples;
- c.** Parents, as well as Venture Scouts, must respect and trust the Leaders. Leaders need to be at ease in their dealings and accessible to parents;
- d.** An effective Unit Executive should set and enforce reasonable standards for all activities organised and the Venture Programme. Venture Scouts must be adequately trained and the Leader is skilful enough to assist the Unit Executive;
- e.** The Unit Code of Ethics must address the issue of relationships, organisation of mixed activities, attendance by Venture Scouts and responsibility of individuals;
- f.** Large events must have the organisation and structure to responsibly cater for 14 ½ years old to 18 years old without placing undue pressure, risk or temptation before any of them;
- g.** Implement stated policies on behaviour and standards;
- h.** Make effective use of Leaders;
- i.** Enforce reasonable curfew times.

Unit Relationships

The Venture Scout Unit is part of the Scouting family. It is important to build a sense of belonging within the Group. We must motivate the Unit to be involved holistically in the activities of the Group.

TROOP AND VENTURE SCOUT LIAISON

There are formal requirements within the Troop Link Badge whereby the Scout Leader and the Venture Scout Leader have to work together. Apart from that, the Unit must create further opportunities.

Suggestions:

- Some of the Unit members to visit the Troop periodically or take part in an activity;
- Link Badge Scouts to be invited to a Unit Meeting where the concept of Venturing is discussed and/or debated;
- Venture Scouts to act as instructors at camps and/or troop meetings;
- Support Activities – create a team consisting of a cub, a scout and a venture to work together towards challenges or during camps.

VENTURE AND ROVER SCOUT LIAISON

There are formal requirements within the Unit Link Badge whereby the Venture Scout Leader and the Rover Scout Leader have to work together. Apart from that, it would be mutually beneficial for Rovers to assist the Unit in some of their activities.

Instructors

By mutual agreement at a Scouters' Meeting, members of the Unit may assist within the different Sections of the Group as and when necessary. These Venture Scouts are still accountable to the Venture Scout Leader. After assisting within a Section for a period of three months, should a Venture Scout wish to carry on as an instructor, he/she may be appointed Instructor by the Group Scout Leader on the recommendation of the Venture Scout Leader and upon completion of the necessary training based on the Venture Programme.

The role of an Instructor/s is to support the Section as needed during a meeting or activity and is not permitted to take charge of the Section or any part of the Section at any time. Upon reaching the age of 18, Instructors are to be terminated.

ROLE OF AN INSTRUCTOR

- May attend Colony/Pack/Troop meetings;
- Play an active (but not leading) role during ceremonies (except the Grand Howl);
- May give instruction in any of the subjects within the sectional programmes and pass assess test work (with the approval of the Section Leader);
- Assist by preparing equipment for games and activities;
- Conduct games under the supervision of an appointed leader.