

Leading Practitioner of the Institute for Outdoor Learning

Initial Information for Participants

This document contains background information on:

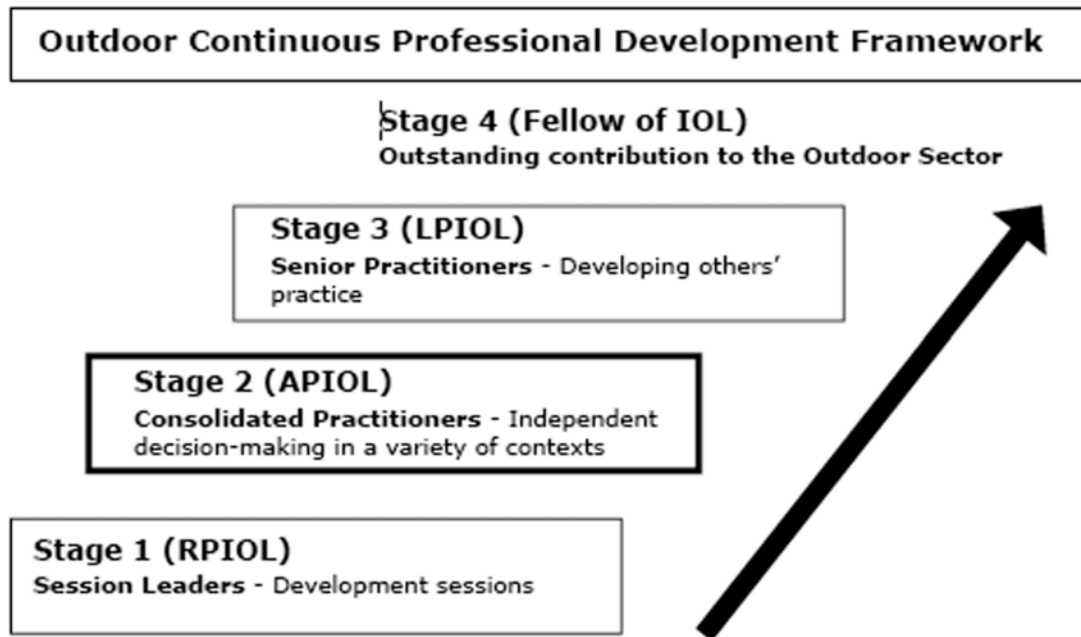
- the purpose of LPIOL for participants, for IOL and for the outdoor sector
- the APIOL - LPIOL journey
- how to get started

If you have any questions or feedback on these notes or the LPIOL application process, please contact Heather Brown on he.brown@btopenworld.com

The technical bits:

1. This document needs to be viewed in View/Print Layout. There are diagrams in it which will not show up in View/Normal.
2. If on your machine the pages of this document keep running on to extra pages, use File/Page Setup to reduce the margins. Then the page numbers referred to will make sense.

IOL's Professional Development Framework



What is a Leading Practitioner?

A Leading Practitioner demonstrates in-depth, professional development in outdoor learning, and has made a significant regional contribution to the outdoor sector.

- LPIOLs may be employed by an organisation, freelancers/sole traders or volunteers.
- "Leadership" is any kind of leadership in excellent outdoor practice (this does not mean you have to be a manager)
- LPIOLs are likely to have been in the field for at least 10 years, and should have consolidated experience at LPIOL level (perhaps 3 years?)
- The Leading Practitioner benchmarks have been mapped to the Qualifications and Credit Framework at Level 6.

A word about Fellow (FIOL)

FIOL is an award which recognizes people's summative service to the outdoor field and sits at QCA Level 8. Fellows have made a significant, strategic and extensive contribution to the field. They have made an **outstanding contribution at national level**. Fellows are likely to have been in the field for at least 15 years, and have been operating at Fellow level for about 5 years.

Fellowships can be awarded by nomination, or applied for by the candidate.

The Role of Leading Practitioner for IOL and the Sector

We have developed LPIOL in response to demand from practitioners and employers, who wanted an accreditation to progress to beyond APIOL, which would provide:

For participants

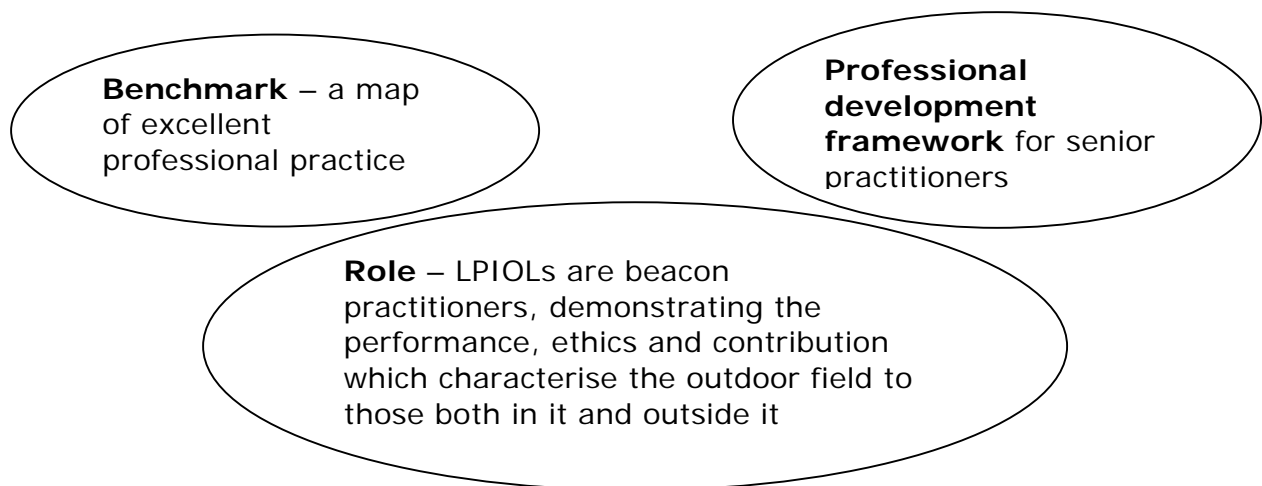
1. something to aspire to after APIOL – an opportunity to reflect
2. definition of good practice at a higher level than APIOL
3. developmental process which motivates people to extend their experience and their contribution to the field

For employers

1. tools to inspire staff to aspire to achieving their potential, to continual improvement.
2. a positive indicator of continued professional development
3. an achievable step for AP holders to aspire to without changing jobs.

The LPIOL criteria and benchmarks have been mapped to the Qualification and Credit Framework at Level 6. (APIOL sits at Level 4 and Fellow at Level 8).

The LPIOL accreditation has 3 key functions:



Leading Practitioner is therefore not just an accreditation; it is a role. Leading Practitioners are the next generation of movers, shakers and leaders in the outdoor sector. LPIOLs are also ambassadors for outdoor learning and guides for younger practitioners. Applying for, achieving and taking on the role of Leading Practitioner therefore means that you are recognised by the Institute and by the field as someone who:

- meets the LPIOL criteria and benchmarks
- is continuing to reflect, develop and grow as an individual
- is continuing to make your skills and experience available to others, to help develop the field.

We hope you are ready to “sign up to” this role, as you prepare for LPIOL.

The Journey from APIOL to LPIOL

At APIOL, you are still building your own practice, but you are also increasingly being seen as a source of expertise, experience and wisdom by other practitioners.

LPIOL is about consciously reaching out to other practitioners beyond those you work with every day, to make a wider contribution to growing the outdoor sector in some way, often at regional level. The application process for LPIOL simply records the journey you have taken, and are still taking, in this direction. So the journey is just as important as the application form.

At the heart of this is your own personal and professional reflection and mindset.

Building the LPIOL mindset

You already have the APIOL qualities of resilience, responsibility, respect, flexibility, sensitivity and integrity; keep building these, together with the good problem-solving and project management practice you developed at APIOL.

The LPIOL mindset adds in a focus on creating the future proactively, taking advantage of all possible opportunities. We hope you can see this progression in this extract from the Benchmarks:

APIOL – An active local contribution	LPIOL – A significant regional contribution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has worked in more than one context where they have had overall responsibility for groups and/or individuals • Has led groups in challenging situations in the outdoors • Has had some responsibility for client liaison, needs analysis and programme and/or expedition design • Has had responsibility for implementing programmes and/or expeditions and for carrying the can when they go wrong • Has had some responsibility for the work of other staff (not necessarily in a management role) • Has worked with a number of different client groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches out to engage/develop practitioners beyond requirements of “day” job • Shapes, initiates, innovates • Works effectively in complex and uncertain circumstances • Makes decisions based on an appreciation of the wider sector of outdoor learning • Influences change, delivers results across region • Delivers concrete results attributable to <u>own personal</u> influence • Creates conditions and opportunities for others to develop • Consistent, not isolated peaks of activity

LPIOL Reflective Practice

LPIOL reflection asks you to learn from experience, for example: "x happened and I learnt y so I will do z next time I run this programme". LPIOL reflection asks you to take this to the next level, to:

- show deeper, more self critical, analytical, self questioning.
- show the ability and the desire to 'get beneath' the day to day reality of practice
- question your core beliefs, values and motivations
- question your actions, assumptions and thought patterns
- gain a clearer insight into yourself and why you do what you do.

Building LPIOL Experience

LPIOL experience is about building and leading good practice with those you work with every day. LPIOL level experience is about looking for opportunities to:

- reach out beyond the people you work with every day, into the region or across the sector in some way
- disseminate and share knowledge and good practice widely
- create lasting change.

LPIOLs need to build experience in 4 key areas



You can do this, for example, by:

- Developing innovative practice and telling others about it, eg by writing articles for outdoor magazines, websites or chat-rooms
- Mentoring and coaching other practitioners
- Running workshops or courses for other practitioners
- Leading or taking part in initiatives to move the outdoor field forward.

You can find other examples of how you might do this under the LPIOL Criteria on the IOL website.

The LPIOL Accreditation Process

Why do we start with a workshop?

Attendance at the workshop is not compulsory (but the LPIOL fee is the same whether you attend or not!) However, we set up the workshop because a good understanding of what the benchmarks and criteria mean in practice is crucial to success at LPIOL.

During the workshop we discuss, but also do experiential activities to practise the move from a problem-solving project management mindset (APIOL) to a future focused leadership mindset (LPIOL). We practice LPIOL reflection, and talk about how to choose your LPIOL coach. The workshop also tells you everything you need to know about how to start putting together your LPIOL application and the assessment process.

We hope this will help you start building the LPIOL mindset and experience, until you are ready to put in your LPIOL application.

The LPIOL application process

1. Prepare an application:
 - Updated APIOL Sections A-F (minus Section C)
 - Personal Statement showing Reflective Practice
 - Statement giving 2 examples for each Criterion, showing Leadership
 - Coach statement
 - Names of 2 referees who will back up the application.
2. Submit application to a Review Board, who will review the evidence presented and decide whether the application meets the benchmarks.
3. Attend a professional discussion (interview) with 2 trained interviewers.
4. Outcome of the process is "accredit" or "not at this time". There is no deferral support as such; however developmental feedback is given.

Getting Started on LPIOL

Workshop details, dates and enrolment forms are on the IOL website. Simply complete the LPIOL enrolment form and pay either the workshop fee or the full LPIOL fee (contact the IOL office to find out how). If you decide to start your LPIOL without attending the workshop, you will be sent the LPIOL Guidance when you enrol.

LPIOL is a journey, not just an application. We hope you will enjoy using this framework to build your practice in new exciting directions, with the help of your LPIOL coach!