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## Participant Handbook

### Table of Contents

1. Welcome to Ironbark Adventure Mentoring .....	2
2. Our Approach & Philosophy .....	2
3. Who Our Adventures Are For.....	3
4. Types of Adventures We Offer.....	3
5. What Participants Can Expect.....	3
6. Roles & Responsibilities .....	4
7. Safety, Risk & Outdoor Environments .....	4
8. Equipment, Clothing & Preparation .....	5
9. Weather, Cancellations & Changes .....	5
10. Health, Behaviour & Boundaries .....	5
11. Communication & Contact .....	6
12. NDIS Information (if applicable) .....	6
13. Media, Photos & Privacy .....	6
14. Feedback, Concerns & Complaints .....	7
15. Acknowledgement & Consent .....	7

## 1. Welcome to Ironbark Adventure Mentoring

Welcome! Ironbark provides personalised, outdoor-based experiences for anyone aged 8 and up looking to spend time outdoors with a consistent, qualified adult.

All activities are led by a mentor/guide — these terms are used interchangeably throughout this handbook. Both refer to the same role: a qualified adult who supports participants safely and respectfully, provides guidance in the outdoors, and fosters personal growth and connection.

We offer practical, active experiences in real outdoor environments, not classrooms or clinics. Activities include mountain biking, hiking, fishing, camping, and custom adventures tailored to interests, abilities, and experience.

Ironbark is not a therapy service. Instead, we offer time, space, movement, challenge, and connection in the outdoors, guided by a skilled mentor/guide who understands risk, safety, environmental responsibility, and working with people of diverse backgrounds.

All activities are conducted in accordance with Australian Adventure Activity Standards (AAAS), Good Practice Guides (GPG), and relevant park, council, and environmental regulations, and are guided by these standards for safe, responsible practice.

This handbook explains how Ironbark operates, what participants and families can expect, and how we work together to create safe, positive outdoor experience

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## 2. Our Approach & Philosophy

Ironbark is guided by a practical, experience-based approach: growth happens through real outdoor experiences with the right level of support from your mentor/guide.

- Adventures combine practical outdoor skills with encouragement, guidance, and space for personal growth.
- Activities are tailored to each participant's abilities, interests, experience, and goals.
- Every adventure, from riding trails, hiking, fishing, or setting up camp, is designed to build:
  - Confidence
  - Resilience
  - Independence
  - Problem-solving skills

Safety, professionalism, and environmental responsibility underpin everything we do. Adventures are planned using AAAS and GPG as guidance, along with Ironbark's Environmental Policy and Equipment Maintenance & Safety Program (EMP).

The natural environment provides genuine, unscripted situations encouraging self-reliance, teamwork, and decision-making. Participants are supported by their mentor/guide to engage safely and develop confidence through experience.

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### 3. Who Our Adventures Are For

Our adventures are suitable for anyone aged 8 and up with general physical capability.

- Most participants are welcome, including those with physical limitations who still want to engage in nature (e.g., partial limb use, blindness).
  - We do not work with participants who have intense or severe behavioural concerns, for safety reasons.
  - Suitability is assessed through an initial meetup and application process, conducted in accordance with AAAS guidance and Ironbark risk assessment procedures.
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### 4. Types of Adventures We Offer

- Mountain Biking
- Hiking
- Fishing
- Camping
- Create Your Own Adventure (e.g., sports practice)
- Group Adventures (any of the above in a small group)

Service Options:

#### 1. 1:1 Adventure Mentoring

Flexible, tailored sessions. Where appropriate, siblings or friends may attend together (1:2 maximum). Payment is invoiced after the activity.

#### 2. Group Adventures

Small-group outdoor adventures for up to 4 participants. Groups may be pre-arranged or matched with other participants following suitability screening. Bookings require a 50% deposit upfront, with the remaining balance invoiced after the activity.

#### 3. Camping Adventures

24hr overnight camping, 1:1 or with a small group. Includes all camping equipment, meals, and activity resources. Payment requires 50% upfront, remainder invoiced after the activity.

Group Adventures are kept small to ensure safety, minimise environmental impact, and maintain quality mentoring experiences.

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### 5. What Participants Can Expect

Participants can expect:

- A safe, supportive outdoor experience with their mentor/guide.
- Opportunities to learn new skills (e.g., mountain biking techniques, fishing knots, camping skills).
- Pre-activity briefings covering trail/terrain orientation, safety protocols, and environmental responsibilities.
- Time for conversation, reflection, or quiet companionship if desired.

- Building rapport and trust with the mentor/guide; mentoring works best as relationships develop over time.
  - Adventures that are flexible; structure may vary depending on activity and participant goals.
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## 6. Roles & Responsibilities

Participants:

- Follow instructions and safety guidance from their mentor/guide.
- Respect others, the environment, and equipment.
- Disclose relevant health, medical, or support needs.
- Take responsibility for their own safety while engaging in activities.

Parents / Guardians:

- Provide accurate information about the participant's needs and health.
- Support adherence to safety rules and participant expectations.
- Review and acknowledge the Participant Handbook before participation.

Mentor/Guide (Provider):

- Plan and deliver safe, structured outdoor experiences.
  - Maintain supervision, manage risks, and ensure equipment is inspected and available.
  - Respond to concerns and follow reporting obligations if needed.
  - Implement environmental practices in line with Ironbark's Environmental Policy and EMP.
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## 7. Safety, Risk & Outdoor Environments

Outdoor adventures involve inherent risks, including:

- Mountain biking on green/blue/black trails
- Hiking on uneven terrain
- Fishing near water
- Camping hazards: fires, gas cooking, wildlife, equipment use

Mentors/guides mitigate risks by:

- Conducting risk assessments and activity planning prior to every session.
  - Carrying emergency equipment (first aid kit, phone, backup supplies).
  - Maintaining appropriate supervision ratios.
  - Planning for weather, environmental hazards, and emergencies.
  - Conducting pre-activity briefings that cover safety, environmental responsibilities, trail/terrain orientation, and emergency procedures.
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## 8. Equipment, Clothing & Preparation

- Participants provide their own bikes, helmets, footwear, and personal gear.
- 1:1 Adventure Mentoring does not include food or water.
- Group Adventures and Camping include meals, water, and activity equipment; participants may bring personal items if preferred.
- Participants must dress appropriately for weather and activity type.

Ironbark Adventure Mentoring follows recommended COVID-19 safety guidance. Participants and guardians must:

- Stay home if unwell or experiencing symptoms.
  - Notify the mentor/guide of any health concerns that could impact participation.
  - Follow hygiene protocols, including handwashing or sanitising before and after activities.
  - Respect any COVID-safe instructions provided by the mentor/guide. Activities may be adjusted to minimise close contact and shared equipment use where necessary.
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## 9. Weather, Cancellations & Changes

Adventures proceed in most weather conditions.

Sessions may be rescheduled, relocated, or cancelled due to:

- Extreme heat
- Dangerous storms, lightning, hail, flooding, or high winds
- Bushfire risk or other environmental hazards

Cancellation and Refund Policy:

- 48+ hours notice: full refund or reschedule
  - <48 hours notice: 50% session fee applies
  - <24 hours notice: 100% session fee charged
  - Cancellations due to extreme weather, bushfire risk, or mentor/guide illness: no-charge reschedule
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## 10. Health, Behaviour & Boundaries

- Participants must act safely and respectfully at all times.
- Unsafe, aggressive, or disruptive behaviour may result in temporary or permanent removal from activities.
- Participants must disclose medical conditions or support needs that may affect safety.
- Mentors/guides provide guidance, but participation is voluntary, and boundaries are respected.

- All incidents are recorded using Ironbark’s Incident Report Form and reviewed for continuous improvement.
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## 11. Communication & Contact

Participants, parents, and guardians can contact the mentor/guide via:

- Email: [hello@ironbarkadventure.com.au](mailto:hello@ironbarkadventure.com.au)
- Phone: 0427 802 078

Communication regarding bookings, feedback, or health updates is encouraged.

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## 12. NDIS Information (if applicable)

Ironbark supports self-managed or plan-managed NDIS participants only.

Booking & Payment Process:

- 1:1 Adventure Mentoring: invoiced after the activity
- Group Adventures / Camping Adventures: require 50% upfront, remainder invoiced after the activity
- Invoices include required NDIS details for processing from plan funds

NDIS Goals We Support May Include:

- Confidence leaving the house and trying new activities
- Improving physical and mental wellbeing
- Increasing independence and community participation
- Learning outdoor skills
- Building meaningful, supported relationships

For questions about your NDIS plan, we can liaise with plan managers or support coordinators.

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## 13. Media, Photos & Privacy

- Personal information is collected to provide safe, high-quality mentoring services.
  - Media (photos/videos) is only used with consent and can be withdrawn at any time.
  - Information is shared only when required to deliver services, comply with the law, or with explicit consent.
  - Records are stored securely, digitally, and backed up regularly.
  - Records are retained for at least 7 years or longer if legally required.
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## 14. Feedback, Concerns & Complaints

- Feedback is encouraged at any time regarding activities, mentoring, safety, or service quality.
  - Concerns can be raised:
    - Directly with the mentor/guide/business owner
    - Email: [hello@ironbarkadventure.com.au](mailto:hello@ironbarkadventure.com.au)
    - Phone: 0427 802 078
    - Complaints Form (available on request)
  - Serious issues, including child safety concerns, are reported immediately to authorities.
  - If unresolved, complaints can be escalated to:
    - NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission
    - Queensland Ombudsman
    - Queensland Human Rights Commission
    - OAIC (privacy)
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## 15. Acknowledgement & Consent

Before participating, participants and/or guardians must acknowledge and consent to:

1. Participation and Safety – activities carry inherent risks; follow safety guidance; disclose relevant health information.
2. Handbook and Policies – I have read and understood the Participant Handbook.
3. Media & Privacy Consent – photos/videos only with consent; consent can be withdrawn.
4. Emergency Consent – mentor/guide may administer first aid and seek medical assistance if needed.
5. Environmental Responsibility – I agree to follow guidelines for protecting the environment and respecting park and council regulations during all activities.
6. Incident Reporting Acknowledgement – I understand that any incidents will be documented and managed in accordance with Ironbark’s safety and EMP procedures.