



# TSB TOPEC Student Handbook

A guide to getting the most out of your time at TOPEC.



**Note:**

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# Student Information Booklet

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## Welcome

Nau Mai Haere Mai ki te Whare Wananga o TOPEC

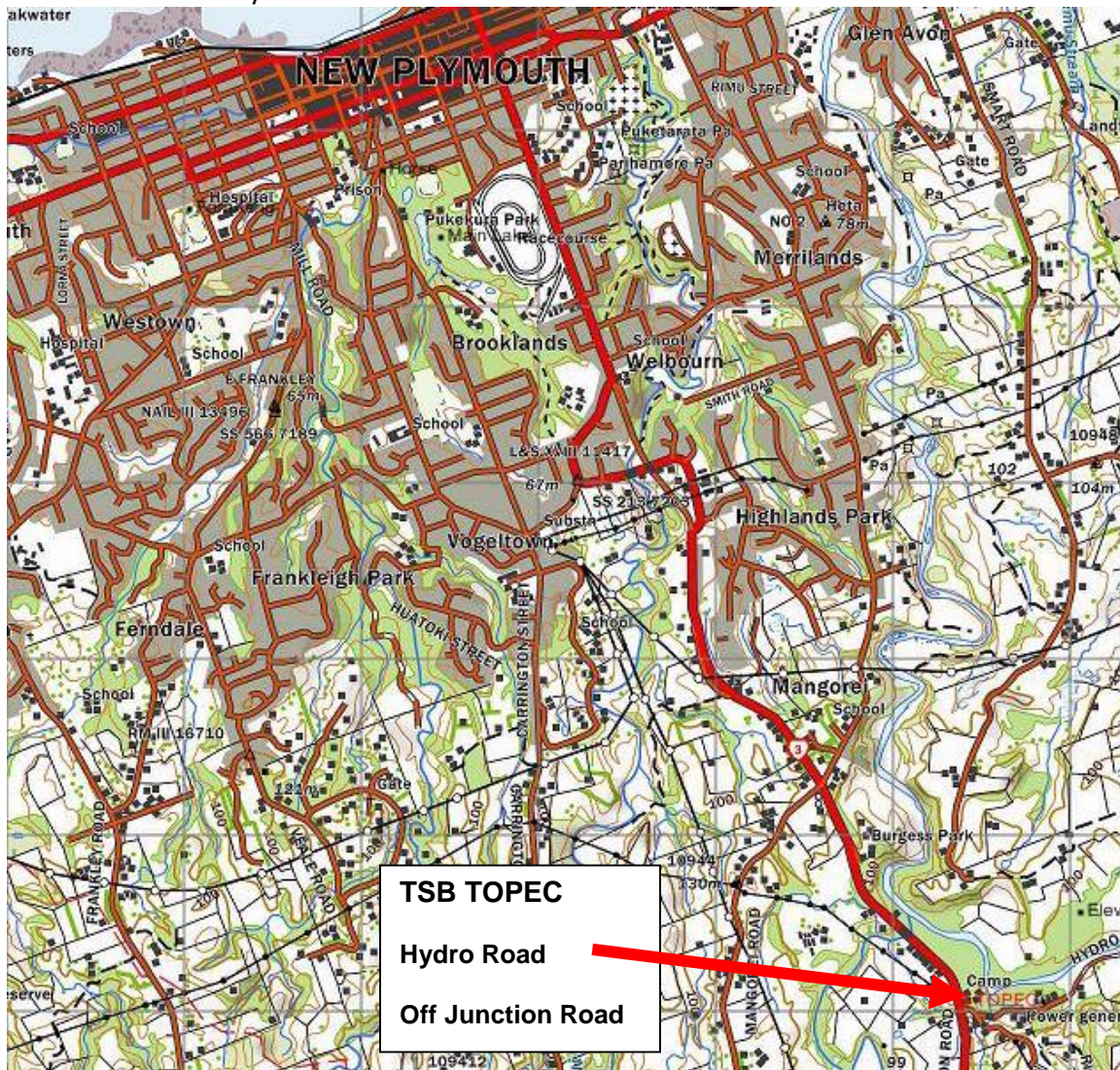
Greetings and Welcome to the Learning Facility of TOPEC

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## Location

TSB TOPEC is situated on the banks of the Waiwhakaiho River near the Mangorei Power Station and the Meeting of the Waters scenic reserve.

Although only 8km from the centre of New Plymouth, the picturesque setting and distance from main roads give it an atmosphere of isolation and tranquillity.

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On site or within easy travelling distance are a variety of suitable environments for outdoor activities. Mt Taranaki, the surrounding bush, rivers and sea are ideal locations for rock climbing, tramping and water sports.

Over the past 30+ years TOPEC has developed into one of New Zealand's most well established outdoor education providers offering programmes for school students from throughout Taranaki and New Zealand – congratulations, you are one of the 30,000+ people that have been to TOPEC!!

## **TOPEC Location and facilities**

At TOPEC we utilise the natural environment of Taranaki – the Maunga ( mountain ) the Awa ( rivers ), the Moana ( sea ). Programmes utilise the natural environment relevant to the activity. Offering a variety of courses, ranging from adventure to leadership you will enjoy some unique experiences utilizing the natural resources and diversity of Taranaki.

You will also learn great outdoor skills while challenging yourself in the process.

## **Activities**

Possible activities include but are not limited to:

White Water Rafting, adventure based learning, kayaking, canoeing, river bugging, raft building, high ropes, low ropes, outdoor climbing wall, abseiling, rogaine, orienteering, tramping, camping, mountaineering, snow caving, body boarding, kayak surfing, sea kayaking, multi-night camps, caving, mud run, team building.

For further information on any of the above activities please see our website or contact us direct.

Please note that activities may be seasonal and not available all year round.

Accommodation options include cabins sleeping 6-8 and separate rooms for teachers. There are Lounge areas, fireplace, meeting/activity rooms.

## **Emergency Contact Details**

Should an emergency arise at home and your family need to contact you, the following information applies.

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TOPEC Ph: 06 7580448

(Please follow the directions if calling outside normal office hours)

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**Tel: 06 7580448 / email: [steve@tsbtopec.co.nz](mailto:steve@tsbtopec.co.nz) / website: [www.tsbtopec.co.nz](http://www.tsbtopec.co.nz)**

## Important information for students

You are about to take part in an exciting and adventurous programme at TOPEC and as part of this you will be visiting some beautiful and often fragile environments. You may find yourself out of your comfort zone at times and you may need to rely on your group to achieve your goals.

TSB TOPEC's philosophy is built around the following concepts.

### Manaakitanga –

behavior that acknowledges the mana of others as having equal or greater importance than ones own

### Whanaungatanga –

The 'glue' that connects people to each other, shared experience, values, a sense of belonging, strengthen each member of the group

### Kaitiakitanga –

The protection and preservation of the gifts of our ancestors for future generations, or guardianship of the environment

You and your group will decide how you will operate with each other during the week in terms of acceptable behaviours. However there are three non-negotiables that we do expect from you for the duration of this course.

#### 1. Care and respect for yourself

You will do your utmost to look after your own safety and well being. This includes eating properly, dressing appropriately and asking questions when unsure.

#### 2. Care and respect for others

You will look after others you come into contact with, and offer support where needed.

#### 3. Care and respect for the environment

You will take care to do as little damage as possible to the environment - leaving all living and non-living things in a state to be enjoyed by others in the future.

## For School Groups

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Your school rules apply

## General Rules

- No smoking
- No drugs
- No alcohol
- No cell phones, I-Pods, MP3 Players, etc.

Students should not bring or use cell phones during their time at TOPEC. This includes during activities, and in down-time outside of these times. We believe that for many of the students coming to TOPEC, they need to learn how to build relationships, connect with the environment and learn to talk to and listen to each other. We believe that the removal of cell phones for this time will help this process.

We encourage people to talk to each other, concentrate on the task at hand without distraction from outside influences. Cell phones will be collected by the teachers on arrival night and placed in a securely locked facility where they remain until the leaving day of the programme. Parents, caregivers and the school will need to be informed of the TOPEC contact number in case of emergency.

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## Disciplinary Procedures

If you show a lack of respect for the above rules you may be asked to leave the course. Your School will be informed and further action maybe undertaken.

## Complaint Procedures

If you have any issues with the quality of the programme you are attending at TOPEC these can be addressed to the Director, either in person or in writing.

## Medical Information

It must be stressed to parents/caregivers and participants the importance of recording all special needs and any conditions that could affect the running of a standard programme on the medical form. If student require regular medication they should bring spares for their instructor to carry.

## Insurance

Students will be covered by normal public liability insurance while at TOPEC. Participants' personal effects are NOT covered by our insurance policy. You should ensure your insurance will cover all eventualities.

## Assessments

If you are doing a Unit Standard assessment as part of your Adventure Challenge programme, your instructor will inform you of your progress throughout the week. You will be given a chance to get up to standard if you are not yet competent and you will know at the end of your programme whether you are 'competent' or not. These results will be posted to your school.

## Lost Property

When you attend TOPEC, please name or label all your clothing and equipment. This will help us return it to you if you leave it behind. Some of the items left behind are very expensive – so it is in your best interests to name your clothing!! All items that end up in our lost property bin are forwarded to the local Salvation Army. If you do accidentally leave gear behind, contact us immediately and we will see if we can locate the item/s for you.

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## Possible activities

TOPEC activities include but are not limited to:

White Water Rafting, adventure based learning, kayaking, canoeing, river bugging, raft building, high ropes, low ropes, outdoor climbing wall, abseiling, rogaine, orienteering, tramping, camping, mountaineering, snow caving, body boarding, kayak surfing, sea kayaking, mutli-night camps, caving, dam dropping, mud run, team building.

Please note that activities may be seasonal and not available all year round.

## TOPEC School Holiday Courses

We may offer 5 Day Holiday Action Challenge programmes. If you are interested, while you are at TOPEC with your school group ask your Instructor for further information, or contact us directly.

## What to gear bring to TOPEC

TOPEC courses all year round. Often the best adventures are in less than ideal weather conditions. Groups therefore need to be prepared so that their clothing can handle any weather. Here is a list of gear for your week at TOPEC.

Your instructor will check you are dressed aping on any activity. You must have all of these items so what you have the opportunity to try to borrow from friends and family before your arrival at TOPEC. If this is not possible some gear can be borrowed from TOPEC ( if available ). Outdoor gear tends to be expensive so please avoid buying it unless you are going to use it again in the future.

## Parka and Overtrousers

These protect you from heavy driving rain and cold winds. Sometimes you may need to wear them all day. Your Parka needs to have a hood and go down past your thighs. Overtrousers need to fit over other clothing on your legs. The best fabrics are Goretex and Reflex as these generally breathe but are expensive. Other fabrics such as Oilskin and PVC backed nylon are also adequate. Quilted ski

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jackets are inadequate as they are designed to keep you warm but not dry. Your rain gear is the most important part of your clothing system at TOPEC.

## **Polypropylene, Fleece or Woollen Jersey**

These provide your insulating layers. At times you may meet conditions that are both cold and wet. Fleece and wool are the only fabrics that will stay warm once they are wet. Polypropylene, also called thermal underwear, is designed to go next to your skin as it wicks the water away from your body. Wool or fleece is then worn over the top to insulate further. Wool and fleece can also be worn directly against the skin. Fabrics such as cotton, denim or nylon do not insulate at all, in fact they cling to the skin keeping the body wet and cold. Only bring these items for social time in the evening or for very hot days.

## **Boots**

When TOPEC students go walking in the mountains or in the bush, they are often walking on uneven ground and so boots that give ankle support are advisable. If you do not have a pair of boots, sneakers that fit well are an affordable option but will not provide the same support.

## **Hats**

A woolly hat or balaclava is a great way to stay warm as most of your body heat is lost through the head.

## **Sunglasses and Sunblock**

Students travelling on snow in winter need sunglasses to avoid damage to the eyes through snow blindness. During sunnier times a high protection sunscreen is vital to prevent sunburn. Please bring a good supply.

## **Pack**

On overnight camp students will need a pack large enough for their own personal gear plus shared group gear such as food and tents etc (supplied by TOPEC).

## **Caving**

Some programmes may do caving as an activity. Bring some overalls or old tracksuit pants/parkas and jerseys for this. They will get muddy and wet.

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Watch for time-keeping and navigation exercises

Optional: Thermos, day pack, camera

**MAKE SURE YOU ARE PREPARED TO GET WET EVERY DAY!!**

TOPEC has a small tuck shop selling Confectionery & Drinks you will need change for this as there is no EFTPOS.

NOTE: If students lose this gear or wilfully damage it they are responsible for the REPLACEMENT \$\$

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## TSB TOPEC STUDENT GEAR LIST



<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Boots</b>	Or other sturdy footwear if boots unavailable.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Old Sport Shoes</b>	2 Pairs if possible – at least 1 pair will get wet and muddy - keep one pair dry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Gumboots</b>	Great for many activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Water proof Rain Coat *</b>	Large <b>waterproof</b> and with a hood PVC or similar. ( not a training shell top )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Over trousers *</b>	At least windproof but preferably waterproof. ( shell – outer layer )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Pack *</b>	Large enough to carry overnight gear plus group equipment. ( 60 litres + )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Sleeping Bag</b>	Preferably down or fibrefill type for good insulation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Socks</b>	4-6 Pairs of woollen socks. ( please avoid short ankle socks as they will lead to blisters )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Thermal Pants</b>	2 Wool / Polyprop or trackpants.( <b>jeans are not suitable</b> for outdoors wear )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Jerseys *</b>	2 Long sleeved woollen or fleece. ( worn over the thermal – mid layer )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Thermal Tops</b>	2 Polyprop or wool tops ( to be worn next to the skin – base layer )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Hats</b>	Beanie/balaclava woollen and a cap or sun hat.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Gloves</b>	Woollen and mitts acceptable. ( season dependant )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>T-shirts</b>	Enough to last 4-5 days for wear in the evenings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Shorts</b>	2 pairs.( season dependant )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Underwear</b>	Enough for 4-5 days.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Torch</b>	Small size – head torch is ideal (as you need to carry it) and include spare batteries.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Toiletries</b>	Include sun block, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Towels</b>	2 towels
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Swimming Gear</b>	May include your own wetsuit though these are provided.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>First Aid</b>	Personal medication, sun block, insect repellent and personal first aid kit if possible, strapping tape, band aids.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Eating Utensils</b>	Spoon, knife, fork. Mug and bowl/plate preferably plastic – <b>for overnight camp.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Drink Bottle</b>	1 Litre to 1.5 Litre is preferred.( old powerade bottle will be sufficient )
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Pillow</b>	And sheet and pillowcase if desired.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Lunch</b>	Lunch for the first day.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Biscuits / home baking</b>	One packet or equivalent home baking for suppers and lunches during the week. To be handed into the kitchen on arrival.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Black rubbish bag</b>	For collecting up your washing at the end of the week.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Sunglasses</b>	Especially in summer
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>OPTIONAL</b>	Wetsuit ~ Snacks

\*These items are likely to be available at TSB TOPEC, some are of limited stock. if you have your own please bring - specialist items inc wet suits and appropriate safety gear are provided by TOPEC. Do not spend money on expensive outdoor clothing that may not be used again.

## Safety and Risk Disclosure.

TOPEC is a not-for-profit making organisation that uses adventure activities to develop people's potential and instil concepts of environmental leadership. We run residential courses but also offer off-site or short programmes.

TOPEC hold a concession with Department of Conservation allowing the managed use of the National Park and other areas managed by them. Managing the environment is a fundamental part of the TOPEC philosophy and Kaitiakitanga or guardianship.

Participation in all activities at TOPEC is voluntary – we call this “challenge by choice”. Activities will be explained to you prior to leaving TOPEC. It is important that you ask questions to clarify any concerns that you have prior to starting the activity as it may be difficult to stop once the activity has started – examples of activities where a “ I am going to do it “ decision means a more committed approach are rafting, caving, overnight trips and other “journey” based activities.

Some activities will require you to complete a training programme or test prior to starting – an example of this is Rafting where practicable you must complete a river safety session first.

The activities listed earlier contain some elements of risk. The risk is countered by carefully structured and sequenced activities and by supervision of activities with trained instructors.

Most activities operate with a single instructor supervising, However, other instructors are available to support in groups in activities in higher risk activities or where groups may need some extra help.

It should also be realised that because of the changeable and unpredictable nature of the outdoors, that the risk can never be reduced to zero. Hazards exist in these activities that may result in serious injury or even death. These hazards, may include but are not limited to:

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- Slippery conditions
- Heights
- Snow and ice conditions
- Swell and waves
- Avalanches
- Rock fall
- Instructor judgement
- Cold and changeable weather
- High winds
- Sunstroke/ sunburn
- Dehydration
- Water, including moving water
- Moving at speed, such as snowsports, vehicle and plane travel

Where periods of extreme weather are present or forecast activities will be modified, restricted or cancelled

*(NB: fractures and soft tissue injuries are very common in speed activities)*

- I understand that there are certain risks associated with outdoor activities that cannot be reduced to zero.
- I know that I am able to ask any questions of TOPEC or the individual instructor to gain a better understanding of the activity before deciding whether to take part, and that the final decision about whether to take part or not is mine.
- If I decide to take part, I understand that the TOPEC instructor will identify any hazards that are liable to arise and correct procedures to deal with these, and that it is necessary for me to follow these.
- If the instructor has taken all reasonable precautions to ensure my safety, and I act outside of this advice, then I acknowledge that I do so at my own risk and I release my TOPEC instructor and all other members and officers of TOPEC from liability for the consequences of my actions.
- I understand that if at any time during the programme I am under the influence of alcohol or drugs, TOPEC has the right to stop my further participation on the programme and I have no right for refund of my course fee.
- I authorise TOPEC to instigate any medical assistance and treatment required in an emergency.
- I understand I may be charged for items I lose or damage.
- I understand that while I am at TOPEC I will be covered by the normal public liability insurance but my personal effects are not covered by TOPEC's insurance policy.
- If under 18; I have read the information sent to me and agree to act within TOPEC's behaviour guidelines and policies summarised.

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### TSB TOPEC Medical Health Profile

Name	<input style="width: 100%; height: 50px;" type="text"/>	Medic Alert number	<input style="width: 100%; height: 50px;" type="text"/>
		(if applicable)	

1. Please tick if you have any of the following:

Migraine	<input type="checkbox"/>	Epilepsy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asthma	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Travel sickness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fits of any type	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chronic nose bleeds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heart condition	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dizzy spells	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colour blindness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>		

2. Are you currently taking medication?      Yes       No

If YES, please state: Ailment/s

Name of medication/s:

Dosage and time/s to be taken

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Other treatment:

3. Have you had any major injuries (breaks or strains) or illness (glandular fever etc) in the last six months that may limit full participation in any activities? Yes  No

If YES, please state the injury/illness.

4. Are you allergic to any of the following?

	Yes	No	Please specify
Prescription medication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
Insect bites/stings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
Other allergies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
What treatment is required?			<input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>

5. When was your last tetanus injection?

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6. Outline any dietary requirements, TOPEC provides set menus and ingredients.  
Students / Clients with food allergies must contact TOPEC directly prior to arrival and make individual arrangements to provide own food to meet individual needs and tastes.

### Food Allergy Disclaimer

*TOPEC makes every attempt to identify ingredients that may cause allergic reactions for those with food allergies. Every effort is made to instruct our staff on the severity of food allergies, however, there is always a risk of contamination. There is also a possibility that manufacturers of the commercial foods we use could change the formulation at any time, without notice. Customers concerned with food allergies need to be aware of this risk. Attending groups cook and prepare meals using ingredients provided by TOPEC, the meal contents and preparation are therefore beyond TOPEC control and the responsibility of the visiting group leaders. TOPEC will not assume any liability for adverse reactions to foods consumed, or items one may come in contact with while eating at TOPEC.*

7. What pain medication can you be given if necessary?

8. To the best of your knowledge, have you been in contact with any contagious or infectious diseases in the last four weeks?

Yes  No

If YES, please give brief details.

9. Is there any information the staff should know to ensure the physical and emotional safety of you?

(For example cultural practices; disability; anxiety about heights/darkness/small spaces; pregnancy; behaviour or emotional problems).

Yes  No

If YES, please state or attach the information.

- I also agree that if prescribed medication needs to be administered, a designated adult will be assigned to do this. I will ensure that prescribed medication is clearly labelled, securely fastened and handed to the designated adult with instructions on its administration.
- I will inform TSB TOPEC as soon as possible of any changes in the medical or other circumstances between now and the commencement of the event.
- I agree to my child / myself receiving any emergency medical, dental, or surgical treatment, including anesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.
- Any medical costs not covered by ACC or a community service card will be paid by me / family.

### Moving Water confidence

please tick the box as applicable to you / your child

Really confident  confident  not confident

Note:

Any information provided will be treated as confidential, to be used only by TSB TOPEC staff for awareness of existing medical or physical conditions and for possible emergency contact. From time to time photographs taken on TSB TOPEC courses may appear in TSB TOPEC publications and promotional material. If you do not wish to be photographed please raise this with the course instructor at the time.

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**Swimming ability**

Strong (200+m)  average (50 – 100m )  weak (25-50m)  non swimmer (under 25m)

**Note:**

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**EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS** (please provide at least 2 sets of contact details)

1.Name (Emergency contact)		Relationship
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Address

Day Phone  Alternative Phone

2.Alternative Emergency contact Name		Relationship
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Address

Day Phone  Alternative Phone

**Parental consent / Individual Consent**

- I agree to my child / myself taking part in the Education outside the Classroom ( EOTC ) / Adventure event.
- The activities depending on the season may include activities such as kayaking, dam dropping, river bugging, adventure based learning, white water rafting, river safety, canoeing, caving, ropes course, orienteering, boogie boarding, abseiling, bridge swing, rock climbing, tramping, fixed structure activities, snow caving, basic alpine skills, confidence course, tramping and camping. These activities may make use of the coasts, rivers, lakes, harbours, caves and the bush of Taranaki and NZ.
- Participation in all activities at TSB TOPEC is voluntary – this is referred to by TSB TOPEC as “challenge by choice”. The activities listed above contain some elements of risk which cannot be completely eliminated. The risk is countered by carefully structured and sequenced activities and by supervision of activities with trained instructors.
- I agree to their / my participation in the activities described. I acknowledge the need for them / me to behave responsibly.

**Acknowledgment of risk**

- I have read the above information and I understand that there are risks associated with involvement in the Outdoor Activities and that these risks cannot be completely eliminated. Hazards exist in these activities that may result in serious injury or even death.
- I understand that TSB TOPEC will identify any foreseeable risks or hazards and implement correct management procedures to eliminate, isolate, or minimize those hazards.
- I understand that I / my child will be involved in the explanation, learning and demonstration of safety procedures associated with an activity.
- If TSB TOPEC has taken all practicable precautions to ensure my safety, and I / my child act outside of the instructions given, then I acknowledge that it is done at my own / my child's risk and I release TSB TOPEC and all other members and officers of TSB TOPEC from liability for the consequences of the actions or inaction.
- I will ensure that my child / I follow these procedures. I / my child will be responsible for any actions or inaction if these procedures are not followed.
- I know that I am able to ask any questions of TSB TOPEC about the activities I / my child will be involved in, to gain a better understanding of the risks involved.
- I recognise that participation in such activities is voluntary and not mandatory. My child and I both understand that I/they may withdraw from the activity if I / they feel at risk. This must be done in consultation with the person in charge and where the safety of self or others is not compromised.
- I understand that TSB TOPEC does not accept responsibility for loss or damage to personal property and that it is my responsibility to check my own insurance policy.
- I understand that if at any time during the programme / activity - I / my child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or act in a way that endangers the safety of self or others, TSB TOPEC has the right to stop further participation the programme / activity and with no right for refund of the fee.

**To be read and signed by adult participant or parent/caregiver of child participant.**

Print name <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	Signed <input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/> date
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