



TSB TOPEC Student Handbook

Bryce Jourdain Scholarship



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

Student Information Booklet

Taranaki Outdoor Pursuits and Education Centre
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Introduction

Bryce Jourdain was a much loved and respected Husband, Father, friend and Outdoor Instructor at Taranaki Outdoor Pursuits and Education Centre (TOPEC).

Bryce lost his life on August 8th 2012 whilst attempting to save Spotswood College students Stephen Kahukaka-Gedye and Joao Felipe Martins De Melo who were washed into the sea from Paritutu Rock, New Plymouth.

The Outdoors was a place that Bryce was incredibly passionate about. Bryce excelled in providing opportunities for people to grow mentally, socially, push their personal limits and discovers new things about themselves and others.

As part of Bryce's legacy, TOPEC in conjunction with Robyn, Isaac and Grace Jourdain offer scholarship opportunities to students of Intermediate School age to participate in an Outdoor focused course. The course is aimed at personal development, self-discovery and unlocking the inner potential.

The scholarship is intended not only for those who have already been identified as high achievers, but also for those with *potential* that may need a boost, an opportunity to shine, or someone to say you *are* allowed to believe in yourself.

The course also aims to inspire participants to become role models for others, to show leadership and importantly to recognize the NZ Outdoors as a special place.

When writing the story of your life, don't let others hold the pen

Drop off and pick ups

Each daily programme is subject to change due to environmental factors or group dynamics.

An outline of the week will be available on day 1 for parents / caregivers to peruse.

Day 1

9.30am Arrival Time – Monday morning, drop off and meet the staff

Welcome and introductions

Accommodation allocated and start of the week long programme.

Day 5

1.00pm Presentations and farewells Friday afternoon

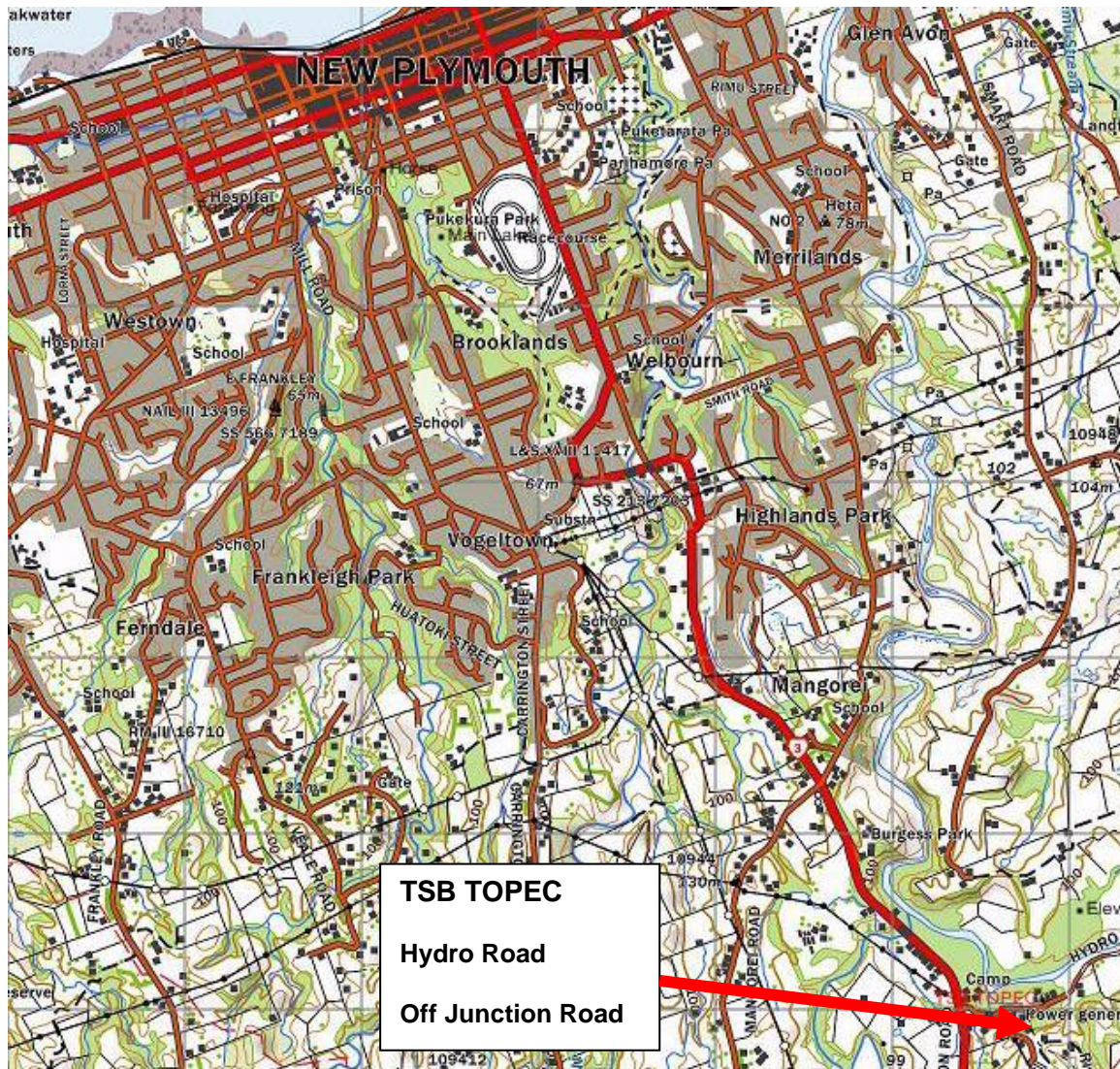
A look back on the week

(Parents encouraged to attend and there will be food and drink provided)

1.30pm Departure – following course reflection and presentations.

Nau Mai Haere Mai ki te Whare Wananga o TOPEC

Greetings and Welcome to the Learning Facility of TOPEC



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.

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 – Mounga (mountain), Awa (rivers) and 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, body boarding, kayak surfing, sailing, dam dropping, sea kayaking, mud run, team building.

Activities will start at 9 am each day and finish around 4 pm with a break for lunch or as required by the group. The activities will be modified as the weather dictates but we will always be out doing something.

Each activity will have one or more TOPEC staff leading it and may be onsite at TOPEC or a further afield in the Taranaki region.

The activities will be chosen and structured to suit the group capabilities to ensure that a positive experience is had by all.

Accommodation

The accommodation will be in the Eco lodge at TOPEC, supervised by a TOPEC staff member.

The group will be cooking and cleaning for themselves as part of week the tasks.

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.

Other accommodation options include cabins sleeping 6-8 .

There are Lounge areas, fireplace, and meeting / activity rooms.

Food and drink

Please inform us of any special dietary or medical issue that you may have well in advance.

The meals will be fixed menu and are prepared and cooked by the group under the TOPEC staff supervision.

Each person will be required to make their own filled rolls each morning for lunch.

Please provide home baking which will be used for morning / afternoon tea or suppers.

We discourage junk food and encourage healthy eating. Fruit will be provided for the groups but individuals may wish to bring their own snacks in addition to the provided food.

Filtered water is readily available to all from various places in the centre. Milo is also available as a hot drink option.

Emergency / Contact Details

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

TOPEC Ph: 06 7580448 (Please follow the directions if calling outside normal office hours)

Other contacts less urgent please email or call.

grover@tsbtopec.co.nz – Director

seton@tsbtopec.co.nz – Lead Instructor

office@tsbtopec.co.nz – Administration

Safety at TOPEC - a commitment to safe practices

All our safety documentation is available for parents / caregivers to view at our offices – please contact us to arrange an appointment if this is required.

All of our staff agrees that a commitment to safe practices is essential to achieve the elimination of incidents, resulting from our actions.

Any incident or action has the potential to cause harm to participants and employees, particularly recognising those at most risk:

- new or less experienced employees
- contract instructors / part time instructors
- course participants
- Members of the Public affected by our actions, especially those most vulnerable in our Community and
- Visitors within or close to our sites.

The TSB TOPEC commitment goes beyond caring for people and includes the complete avoidance of damage to:

- Our environment,
- Public utilities / services and
- Property of any kind, including our own and adjacent buildings/property owned by others.

We will achieve this by training and working **together**, through our individual and collective responsibilities to:

- **Work safely,**
- **To report ALL** unsafe acts, near misses and incidents
- **To follow** instruction / policy and **to contribute** suggestions or advice that will help everyone to work safely towards our **health and safety goals**

Safety Promotion

TOPEC core safety values are promoted throughout the operation. Policy, procedure, practices and the allocation of resources must clearly demonstrate the organisation's commitment to safety. The following methods are used to promote safety:

- Posting the "SAFETY" core principles in prominent locations around the base of operations.
- Having forums for employee input and reporting of safety concerns
- Having annual agreed safety objectives
- Regular safety discussions, reports and meetings.

TOPEC Core Safety Principles

All staff at TOPEC embraces "S.A.F.E.T.Y" principles:

1. **S**afe does not mean risk free - we will disclose risks, we will manage risks and support Challenge by Choice
2. **A**ssess - experience is no assurance that mishaps will not happen. Continually reassess the situation to manage risks and keep within limits.
3. **F**ocus - familiarity and prolonged exposure without a mishap can lead to a loss of appreciation of risk- Risk Perception changes with experience. Ensure the focus on real risk is maintained.
4. **E**veryone is responsible for the identification and management of risk - participants, staff, management
5. **T**hink before you act - be conservative, listen to your instincts and be prepared to stop. Always operate in the safest manner practicable.
6. **Y**our contribution can help others - report hazards, incidents, accidents so others can learn.

We will achieve "S.A.F.E.T.Y" by training and working together and through our individual and collective responsibilities.

TSB TOPEC is audited by Outdoors Mark and Maritime NZ to ensure that our operation meets National Industry requirements. This audit also looks at risk management, staff competency, staff training, accident reporting and equipment.

TSB TOPEC and OutdoorsMark (Safety Accreditation)

OutdoorsMark is a safety-focused systems audit designed by the New Zealand outdoor sector for the New Zealand outdoor sector. It is suitable for a very wide range of outdoor activity providers from sole traders to multi-activity outdoor centres and is flexible enough to cater for all circumstances.

OutdoorsMark provides an independent process for assessing the robustness of operational safety policies, procedures and practices for alignment with currently accepted outdoor sector standards.

OutdoorsMark is awarded to organisations that achieve the required standard and is valid for a period of up to three years.

OutdoorsMark audits are conducted by approved OutdoorsMark auditors.

OutdoorsMark is administered, managed, and promoted by Outdoors New Zealand, the lead organisation supporting outdoor recreation, outdoor education and adventure activity providers in New Zealand. Encouraging best practice and continuous improvement in outdoor safety and programme delivery is a key area of focus for Outdoors New Zealand.

OutdoorsMark is recognised by:

Department of Conservation, Ministry of Education, ACC, NZ Mountain Safety Council, Water Safety NZ, NZ Outdoor Instructors Association, Education Outdoors NZ, Secondary Principals Council

Conduct

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.

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.

TSB TOPEC PHILOSOPHY

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

Manaakitanga –

Behaviour that acknowledges the mana of others as having equal or greater importance than one's own

Whanaungatanga –

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

Kaitiakitanga –

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

General Rules

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

Students should avoid bringing or using 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 limiting 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.

If for any reason a student needs to contact home, this can be done through TOPEC after first talking with a TOPEC senior staff member. We are aware that for some being away from home can be quite daunting and we will do everything we can to reassure these people.

Parents, caregivers and the school will need to be informed of the TOPEC contact number in case of emergency.

Disciplinary Procedures

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

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.

NOTES ABOUT GEAR TO BRING TO TOPEC

TOPEC courses run rain or shine, all year round. Often the best adventures are to be had in what seems like the most challenging conditions. Groups therefore need to be prepared so that their clothing can handle any weather. TOPEC will provide you with a list of gear for your week at TOPEC. If you don't have any of the items you should try to borrow from friends and family. If this is not possible then you may be able to borrow it from TOPEC but we do have only limited supplies and sizes and cannot guarantee availability.

Parka and Over trousers

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. Over trousers 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. If you bring PVC you will stay dry. Quilted ski 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 footwear that give ankle support are essential. However, a good solid pair of sneakers will be acceptable for most activities.

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. Both in the mountains and on the sea a high protection sunscreen is vital to prevent sunburn. Please bring a good supply.

Pack

A solid day pack or school pack is an important piece of kit to bring on the scholarship week as there will be times where the group will go out and about and gear, food etc will need to be carried. There will be no overnight trip as part of the Bryce Jourdain Scholarship.

General Information

MAKE SURE YOU ARE PREPARED TO GET WET EVERY DAY