

OP POLICIES AND FAQs



UWC East Africa makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future. We are committed to developing balanced global citizens who are empowered to act responsibly in a complex world.

OP Mission

Inclusively offer outdoor education as an integral part of UWC East Africa's educational model.

OP Vision

Working towards becoming a world reference in terms of outdoor education, bridging the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge, skills and inquiry through experiential learning.

OP Values

(same as School values)

UWC East Africa is a member of the UWC movement. We live and learn together as part of a community that values:

1. A safe, collaborative and caring community.
2. A sense of belonging, acceptance and tolerance.
3. A holistic and diverse portfolio of learning experiences.
4. An education in a global context that promotes an appreciation and understanding of multiple perspectives and interdependence of individuals, societies and environments.
5. Innovation over perfection within a supportive community where learners are motivated to embrace personal challenge and reflection.
6. The ambition of students to demonstrate initiative and take on leadership roles.
7. Opportunities to engage with the culture and nature of East Africa.
8. A shared responsibility and a collective duty of care for ourselves, each other and the environment.
9. A healthy lifestyle and active pursuits.
10. The happiness and well-being of our community.

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Participating in UWC East Africa's OP trips

Who is eligible?

For safeguarding, logistical and safety-related reasons, we allow only enrolled students, staff members, and spouses of UWC East Africa to participate in our OP trips.

What are the expectations on OP trips?

When on a trip, all school rules and values apply.

Do I need insurance?

It is strongly recommended that students and members of staff have an updated insurance package that will cover outdoor activities, including underwater activities and excursions that involve hiking in altitude. The premium should cover medical evacuation (commonly known as "medievac") from remote areas to medical facilities.

How do I sign up for a trip?

Through the [LIFE](#) system. Students sign-up and parental consent is centralised in the LIFE system. It is the participant's responsibility to update medical information, dietary information, documentation; students must have updated and quality copies of their passport and student pass on [LIFE](#).

Once I'm signed up, what's next?

Come to an OP Meet, which will always be on Fridays after school. OP Coordinators, Student-Leaders or other staff members involved in OP will guide you through.

You must come to an OP Meet right after the sign-up period closes because you must:

- Attend a pre-trip meeting and have your questions answered;
- Collect the equipment you want to borrow;
- Complete the bag check (the Friday before the trip);
- Complete the fitness requirements (some trips require up to 3 OP trainings);
- Pack the bus (the day before the trip).

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PAYMENT

How do I pay for trips?

Once the sign-up period closes and a student has received parental consent, the students' school fees account will be invoiced for the full amount of the trip. The student's sign-up and parental consent is a commitment to the school to pay for the trip and go on the trip. Once a student's account is invoiced, the trip is non-refundable.

For trips involving national park fees and PADI training, we require the full payment to be done at least 1 month prior to the trip.

What is the responsibility of the students?

Before you sign up, make sure you are available, which means that you do not have other commitments for the dates of the trip (look at your agendas/calendars).

Why is there a payment policy?

The Outdoor Pursuits programmes are meticulously planned to be efficient and cost effective. The costs are based on a certain number of participants and that keeps the price at its lowest. This policy has been created in order to share with parents and students the expectations of the OP department and the school when students cancel trip participation late and the financial implications it will have for those students and their parents. We realise that there will always be circumstances which mean that a student may not go on a trip, like extreme illness or bereavement in a family*, however these cases are rare.

The reason for this policy is to:

- 1) Reduce the number of last minute student cancellations of trips.
- 2) Reduce the amount of food and money wasted due to these late student cancellations.
- 3) Make students accountable for their decisions, both when signing up to OP trips and also when they are thinking about cancelling a trip.
- 4) Make parents accountable for ensuring they are aware of which trips a student has registered for, and as a consequence increasing the communication between parents and students about these opportunities.
- 5) Have a clear communicated guideline for transparency and accountability.
- 6) Reduce unnecessary administrative processes for staff
- 7) Provide a better and safer experience for students and staff taking part.

*For trips in National Parks or involving PADI training: Once we buy the permits for the national parks or pay for the PADI training, even in cases of illness or bereavement, we will not be able to recover these fees. Also note that the funds are not transferable to another person.

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Equipment rental

Who can borrow equipment?

We lend equipment only to students and staff members going on school trips.

In order to limit wear, tear and loss of our equipment, we do not lend equipment to any staff members, parents, guardians, friends, students (including residential students during holidays), or anyone else inside or outside of our community, unless they take part in a school trip.

The OP Coordinators reserve the right to approve or disapprove equipment rental.

How can I borrow equipment?

Most equipment for OP trips can be borrowed from the OP store prior to trips on Mondays (equipment day) or on Fridays (OP Meets). A returnable deposit of TZS 10,000 is required for the equipment to be able to be borrowed.

The TZS 10,000 deposit will be returned if:

- 1) All equipment is returned by the student within 7 days after returning from the trip (on Mondays only).
- 2) All equipment is returned in working order.

The deposit will not be returned if:

- 1) At least one item is not returned by the person who borrowed it. This includes if the item is returned by a member of staff/or of the group, as the borrower has lost it. It is the borrower's responsibility to return all items.
- 2) *An item or several items are not brought back within 7 days of the return of the trip.
- 3) **If an item is lost, damaged or broken from unreasonable use/care.

*Additionally, from the 8th day after returning from the trip, the equipment borrower will be charged an extra TZS 10,000 every Monday at 4 pm until they return the equipment, an amount that will not be refunded and will be invoiced through their school account.

**In that case, the item will also be charged to the borrowers' school account.

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Fitness requirements

What is it?

What we used to call “fitness tests” is now called “OP trainings”. Every Friday afternoon after school, there will be opportunities to train in preparation for the OP trips. These training sessions may be led and monitored by OP Coordinators, school staff involved in OP, or Student-Leaders. There are a few options of OP trainings that demonstrate sufficient fitness:

- 5-km run (around the big field or, in Arusha, around the school track);
- Crossfit training for 30 minutes (Moshi on Thursday mornings);
- Bodyweight training circuit completed at least once and running between each exercise (Arusha campus);
- Swim trainings (for the Reefs programme);
- Sunday bike rides (on both campuses happening most weekends);
- Any other training deemed adequate by OP Coordinators.

When are the OP training sessions?

Friday right after school.

Why?

As the OP programmes develop, we are working on building a culture of wellness as part of the outdoor education that we provide. Moreover, the fitness requirements are a measure of safety, ensuring that our students and staff have the minimal physical capacity to complete the trips safely and in an enjoyable manner.

How do I know what the fitness requirements are?

Please refer to the “Programmes Catalogues” found on the school website.

