

Mountain Leader assessment course notes

Introduction

The Mountain Leader scheme was established to promote the safe enjoyment of the hills and mountains. The scheme provides training and assessment in the technical and group management skills required by those who wish to lead groups in the mountains, hills and moorlands of the United Kingdom and Ireland, other than in winter conditions. The Mountain Leader scheme offers the opportunity to gain technical competence in leading walkers in the hills and mountains.

The Mountain Leader assessment course allows you to demonstrate the technical skills, judgements and areas of knowledge deemed necessary to ensure an individual is safe to work within the scope of the award. It does not provide a rock climbing qualification, nor does it cover the skills required for the planned use of a rope. This is a 5 day course (minimum of 60 hours).

Mountain Training aims to inspire, enable and develop people in walking, climbing and mountaineering through the provision of nationally and internationally recognised skills training and leadership qualifications. All Mountain Training courses are quality assured.

[Mountain Training: Our Ethos](#)

Learn, Lead, Inspire - Into the Hills

Prerequisites for the Mountain Leader assessment course

Before you book onto the Mountain Leader assessment course you must;

- Have attended a Mountain Leader training course (or have been granted exemption) and be familiar with the syllabus
- Have logged a minimum of 40 Quality Mountain Days in three different regions of the UK and Ireland
- Hold a current first aid certificate, minimum 16 hours and relevant to your work as a Mountain Leader
- Have logged at least 8 nights camping, including at least 4 nights wild camping

Please ensure you have entered your minimum prerequisites in your digital logbook (DLOG) at the time of confirming your place on the assessment course.

Mountain Leader assessment course content

The course will cover the Mountain Leader syllabus which includes the following areas:

- Group management and the responsibilities of the group leader
- Navigation
- Access and the environment
- Hazards (including steep ground and rivers) and emergency procedures
- Equipment
- Expedition skills
- Weather
- Background knowledge

Detailed information on each of the above topics can be found in the Mountain Leader Handbook, and the onus is on you to be competent in all of them by the time you come to assessment.

Potential outcomes of assessment

Following the assessment the course director will complete a course report on CMS which will record one of three possible results:

Pass: Awarded where the candidate has demonstrated appropriate knowledge and application of the course syllabus, and has shown the necessary experience and attributes of a Mountain Leader.

Defer: Awarded where the candidate has generally performed well and has shown the necessary experience and attributes, but where complete proficiency has not been attained in certain aspects of the syllabus or where a lack of experience has been identified.

Fail: Awarded where the candidate's performance has been generally weak, or the necessary experience and attributes have not been shown. A complete assessment course will need to be subsequently attended.

When a candidate's performance merits a defer or fail result the candidate will have a formal written report containing individualized feedback. All relevant information will be included to support the deferred/failed candidate and the assessor who conducts the re-assessment.

Access to courses

Mountain Training is committed to ensuring that everyone has equal opportunity to attend our courses. If you have a particular need that requires extra assistance, please discuss it with Mountain Training or your provider.

More information can be found here

Sustainable Transport

Mountain Training recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering impact on the environment, and acknowledges the responsibility to take reasonable measures to safeguard the environment for both the

present and future generations. We therefore ask participants to consider sustainable transport to access courses.

The BMC Community Liftshare site

Insurance

Mountain Training recommends that you consider personal accident and cancellation insurance. If you already have insurance cover, check that it covers you for the activity you are undertaking.

Partnerships

Mountain Training Association - The Mountain Training Association is a membership community that provides members with support and development opportunities, mentoring, resources, workshops and events to help those working towards their qualification, and keep skills and knowledge current for those already qualified.

British Mountaineering Council - The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) is the national representative body for England and Wales that exists to protect the freedoms and promote the interests of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers.

Useful links

<https://www.mountain-training.org/media/dvzfszlq/mountain-leader-candidate-handbook-july-2024.pdf>

[Hillwalking by Steve Long: the official handbook for Mountain Training's walking schemes](#)

[Mountain Training's YouTube channel](#)

[Mountain Training's Reasonable Adjustment policy](#)

[Mountain Training Association](#)

[British Mountaineering Council](#)



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Course programme

The course will start on Monday morning.

There will be a short introduction to the course before we go onto the hills so please come dressed appropriately.

DLOG:

Please have your DLOG completed and up to date with the pre-requisite number of hill days and group days.

For more info and helpful checklists, etc follow this link: [Mountain Training Website info](#)

Hold a current First Aid qualification.

Maps: Please ensure you have:

- The best 1:25000 map is called [Dinky+](#) and covers the central area of the Lakes. It only covers the central area, so please be prepared to buy one of the traditional 1:25 scale maps in the list below.
or
- The 4 x 1:25.000 of the Lake District that's OL 4, 5, 6 & 7 (These are not essential)
- 1:50.000 Sheet No 90
- BMC Harveys 1:40

Kit:

Please pack your sack as if you were leading a group in the mountains for the day. This should include what you consider to be suitable emergency & first aid kit as well as personal kit. (If you can not afford it, please do not feel that you must purchase special kit e.g. rope, shelter etc, please get in touch if you have any questions)

Mountain Lectures

Please pick two subjects from the list below and prepare "hill chats" or discussions to deliver during a mountain day (roughly five to ten minutes). If you have some other area of expertise or interest please contact Climb365 to discuss if these would be appropriate.

These should be interactive, maybe using props or laminated cards or whatever you feel appropriate, but will be delivered on the hill as part of our journey.

Forestry plantations

Natural woodland

Upland ground-nesting birds

Early hill settlements

The ecology of walls

Patterned ground

Deer on mountains

Shooting and fishing in the uplands

Fragile upland environments

The ecology of bogs

Trees above 600m

Common mountain birds and their identification

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Day 1 Introductory mountain day

Assessment of:

- Course introductions and overview of assessment process
- Qualification pathways and scope of the scheme
- Course programme
- Outcomes
- Discussion of prerequisites and DLOG
- Introductory Navigation

Evening

- Background knowledge
- Responsibilities of a group leader
- Conservation practices
- Current access legislation
- Weather interpretation
- Go through the home paper (please bring this completed to the first day)

Day 2 Security on steep ground

Assessment of:

- Weather interpretation
- Navigation, walking and route finding in the mountains
- Group management and leadership strategies
- Hazards of steep ground (with and without a rope)
- Knowledge of the mountains

Please bring a helmet if you have one. Also any other equipment you think suitable for working with ropes. We will supply rope & helmet if you do not have it.

Evening

- Expedition planning

Day 3 Mountain Expedition and overnight wild camp

Assessment of:

- Weather interpretation
- Navigation
- Group management and leadership strategies
- Knowledge of the mountains
- Camp craft and associated equipment
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Evening

- Poor visibility/ night navigation
- Wild camp

Day 4 Mountain Expedition and overnight wild camp

Assessment of:

- Weather interpretation
- Navigation
- Group management and leadership strategies
- Knowledge of the mountains
- Camp craft and associated equipment

Evening

- Poor visibility/ night navigation
- Wild camp

Day 5 Mountain Expedition and overnight wild camp

Assessment of:

- Weather interpretation
- Navigation
- Group management and leadership strategies
- Knowledge of the mountains
- Camp craft and associated equipment
- River crossing

Feedback:

- Results, Individual debriefs
- Discussion of Mountain Training pathway

The programme is subject to change to make best use of the weather and venues chosen for the course.