

Learning to Lead

The rope in my pack is discreet, but it's ready, the person at the back is more capable than they think....



Learning to lead: the steps

Stage 1

Prior Experience

SML recruits need to have a minimum of 12 months hill-walking experience with 20 quality mountain days under their belt prior to the course.

Stage 2

Registration

Registration with MLTS (Mountain Leader Training Scotland) and the MCoFS (Mountaineering Council of Scotland). Candidates receive a special scheme logbook.

Stage 3

Training Course

Courses do operate throughout the UK, for Scotland contact www.climbmts.co.uk other providers can be found at www.mlta.co.uk the training course lasts for 6 days.

Stage 4

Consolidation

Of vital importance is the consolidation of skills learned on the course, the ML training course is nowhere enough preparation on its own, unless you have a huge amount of experience. You need to log an absolute minimum of 40 QMD's prior to assessment.

Stage 5

First Aid Course

A separate first aid qualification 2 day / 16 hour course is also required prior to assessment.

Examination

Stage 6

The SML examination lasts for 5 days, two nights are spent out on expedition.

Pass Hooray! You are a certified leader.

Defer You're generally good but have shown weaknesses or you have been identified as lacking experience in certain areas, 1 day reassessment, 1-1 with an assessor for 4 to 6 hours.

FAIL You haven't performed well and/or have made some poor decisions, you need more experience using your hill skills.

Skills – tick list

TICK LIST:

NAVIGATION

You will learn to:

Use map scale as a tool, Apply slope aspect to narrow down your position, Orientate your map using the landscape, Micro navigate, Navigate in poor visibility including darkness.

TICK LIST:

ROPEWORK

You will learn to:

Find bombproof anchors, Abseil, Safeguard a client descending, Secure a nervous client on steep ground, Learn rope management, Learn to risk assess and manage groups .

TICK LIST:

WATER HAZARDS

You will learn to:

Avoid dangerous crossings, cross rivers and streams using ropes, cross safely with a group, select the right crossing points.

Skills – tick list

TICK LIST:

LEADERSHIP

You will learn to:

Move a group on difficult terrain, Keep them enthused, Make suitable route choices, Identify and manage risk, Take responsibility, Learn to pack a leaders rucksack. Learn to be an equipment guru.

TICK LIST:

WEATHER

You will learn to:

Interpret weather charts, Understand how the weather effects you and your group, design route strategies based on weather conditions. Learn about weather hazards.

TICK LIST:

ENVIRONMENT

You will learn to:

Identify plant species from moorland to arctic mountain tops, Interpret plant habitats, Understand access and conservation law, Gain further understand of human impact on the upland landscape, Appreciate the alpine UK environment.

“Experience is everything”

