Mountain Training

International Mountain Leader

Candidate handbook



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Preface

This handbook contains all the information needed to progress through the International Mountain Leader qualification. It is designed to support the knowledge and experience of candidates, trainers and assessors whilst at the same time it avoids prescribing techniques.

Mountain Training recognises that walking, climbing, and mountaineering are activities that have associated risks. Mountain Training provides training and assessment courses and guidance to help leaders develop the skills to manage the risks associated with the environment in which they operate and to enable new participants to have positive experiences.

All leaders owe a heightened duty of care to the people they lead, their colleagues, and the wider public who may be impacted by the leader's actions.

Mountain Training qualified leaders will act in the best interests of their group, individual group members and others, and they will always act within their competence to prevent harm to them.

Acknowledgements

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International Mountain Trekking

Throughout this handbook there are references to International Mountain Trekking by Plas y Brenin instructional team, which we publish to support people walking overseas. It is packed with essential information and techniques and we have listed the relevant chapter(s) for each syllabus area.

1. Qualification pathway

1.1 Introduction

The International Mountain Leader qualification (IML) provides comprehensive training and assessment for individuals who aspire to work as leaders in Europe and further afield. It integrates training, experience and assessment in a variety of realistic situations.

1.2 Scope of the qualification

A qualified International Mountain Leader can lead others in mountain areas worldwide at all times of year, including at altitude and on snow-covered terrain, where the activity is walking (hiking or trekking).

1.2.1 Terrain

Summer: In rugged, steep, and/or consequential terrain movement is typically on footpaths or marked trails, which may include short sections of fixed equipment or rocky steps. International Mountain Leaders can also negotiate sections of missing footpaths.

Winter/snow-covered terrain: International Mountain Leader activity will predominantly take place in low to medium gradient snow-covered terrain. In high gradient terrain the hardness of the snow, the seriousness of the terrain and the consequences of a slip will influence whether the terrain is appropriate for the planned activity. Glaciers may only be crossed where they form part of a nationally or internationally accepted and waymarked walking route and this meets the national regulations of the country, and where the use of a harness and rope is not necessary to safeguard progression and thus the glacier terrain crossed is benign.

1.2.2 Exclusions

- Via ferrata routes where specialist equipment is necessary to prevent a fall.
- All glaciers unless they meet the description in 1.2.1.
- Mountaineering, alpinism, climbing or any planned use of a rope, harness, helmet.
- Winter Grade 1 ground and above (see definition in appendix).
- Steep hard snow.
- Nordic or free-heel skiing

This qualification is not a substitute for the Winter Mountain Leader qualification. Those who wish to lead parties in all mountainous terrain in the UK and Ireland in winter conditions should complete the Winter Mountain Leader qualification.

1.3 Prerequisites at each stage of the qualification

1.3.1 Registration prerequisites

- You must have passed Mountain Leader assessment (or another UIAA-accredited mountain walking leader qualification).
- You must have recorded 20 international summer mountain days in DLOG.
- You must have recorded 20 quality winter days in the UK or overseas in DLOG (see Appendix 1).
- You must have a referee endorsing your experience in DLOG, preferably a Mountaineering Instructor, Guide or training board approved provider. A long term walking partner or suitable employer could be considered as an appropriate referee.

As with all Mountain Training qualifications, these are the minimum requirements. **As a general indication, the minimum quality days listed in the prerequisites should be a representative sample rather than a candidate's total experience.**

Guidance note: The IML is a leadership qualification and therefore it is recommended that you have used your Mountain Leader qualification to lead groups in the mountains both in the UK and overseas.

Once you have paid the registration fee, you must click the 'Send to MT' button to let us know your DLOG is ready to be reviewed. Your logbook will then be reviewed by a Mountain Training UK & Ireland technical officer – this can take up to 30 days.

Aspirant membership

After your registration has been approved, you will be invited to join BAIML as an Aspirant Member for free until the end of the membership year (31st December).

BAIML supports aspirant and qualified International Mountain Leaders in the UK and represents them at the Union of International Mountain Leader Associations. BAIML offers a range of workshops for trainee and qualified leaders as well as a quarterly magazine, gear deals/discounts, a monthly newsletter and an insurance deal.

1.3.2 Summer training prerequisites

- Your International Mountain Leader registration must have been approved.

1.3.3 Summer assessment prerequisites

- You must have completed International Mountain Leader summer training (there is no exemption from training).
- You must be familiar with the syllabus.
- You must have passed the timed navigation test.

Post-training and before presenting yourself for assessment:

- You must have gained further experience since completing the summer training over at least 3 months.
- You must have logged a further 10 quality international summer days.

1.3.4 Winter training prerequisites

- You must have completed International Mountain Leader summer training.
- You must have some experience on snowshoes.

1.3.5 Winter assessment prerequisites

- You must have passed the International Mountain Leader summer assessment.
- You must have completed International Mountain Leader winter training module 1.
- You must have completed International Mountain Leader winter training module 2, or one of the approved alternatives outlined in 2.1 Course structure.

(It is recommended that candidates allow 6 months between winter training and assessment.)

- You must be familiar with the syllabus.
- You must have logged the following experience in a variety of mountain terrain:
    - 30 quality international summer days.
    - 40 quality winter days (of which at least 10 should be overseas, 13 on snowshoes).
    - 10 professional leadership days (could be within any of the 70 above) - 3 with reflective comments.

- You must have a current first aid certificate, gained by completing an in-person (not online) course which involved at least two full days, or equivalent, of instruction and included an element of assessment.

2.3.6 BAIML membership and a UIMLA licence prerequisites:

- You must have completed the following 3 modules provided by BAIML:
    - A minimum 6-hour course in Travel Risk Management supplemented by course discussions and self-directed learning tasks during the scheme such that the accumulated effort is approximately 12 hours.
    - A minimum 6-hour course in Environment Awareness, Sustainability and Minimum Impact supplemented by course discussions and self-directed learning tasks during the scheme such that the accumulated effort is approximately 12 hours.
    - A minimum of 6 hours learning from recognised standard safeguarding courses. Ideally, at least 3 hours should be specific to the activities of an International Mountain Leader.

2. Course structure

UIMLA requires that the period of training and assessment should not exceed five years and in normal circumstances this policy will apply. In exceptional circumstances, such as illness, or for other reasons including pregnancy and maternity leave, Mountain Training UK & Ireland may allow a longer period.

2.1 Summer training

Summer training is delivered over five days and will include a timed navigation test.

Order of courses

At this stage candidates can choose to either progress to IML summer assessment, or either of the IML winter training modules. Please note candidates must have passed the IML timed navigation test and completed an additional 10 quality international summer days before attending the IML summer assessment.

Before the final IML winter assessment, all candidates must have passed the IML summer assessment and completed at least 40 quality winter mountain days, of which at least ten should be overseas and 13 on showshoes. Candidates must also have logged 10 professional leadership days - 3 with reflective comments..

2.2 Summer assessment

The International Mountain Leader summer assessment is four days long and is based outside the UK.

The summer assessment course can be completed before or after winter training.

2.3 Winter training

International Mountain Leader winter training is delivered in two modules.

Module 1 is a 6 day course, delivered in mainland Europe by an MTUKI approved IML provider and covers:

- The winter elements of the International Mountain Leader syllabus that apply to walking on soft snow and the use of snow shoes.
- What to expect at winter assessment.
- Feedback and areas to focus on prior to assessment.

Module 2 covers the winter elements of the International Mountain Leader syllabus that apply to walking on hard snow, including the use of ice axes and foot traction devices including crampons.

There are three ways to satisfy the requirements of Module 2:

- Attend an IML winter training module 2 course from an MTUKI approved IML provider (4 days); or
- Complete an MTUKI (MTS) Winter Mountain Leader training course (or assessment, if exemption was gained for training); or
- Attend a comparable minimum 4 day winter skills course. You will need to apply to MTUKI for accreditation of prior learning. You are encouraged to check if a provider can deliver accredited training before attending a course.

2.4 Winter assessment

Winter assessment is the final element of the International Mountain Leader qualification. The course lasts for 6 days, including a two night expedition.

2.5 Assessment results

Possible assessment results are: Pass, Defer, Fail, Not yet completed, Withdrew, Did not show.

There is no exemption from any element of assessment.

You may take two summer and/or two winter reassessments before being required to take the entire summer/winter assessment again; the only exception to this is the timed navigation test, for which no limit is set.

Since reassessments will be based on information gained during the initial assessment, all reassessments must be completed within a five year period from the date of the original assessment.

3. Course delivery

All International Mountain Leader courses are delivered by approved course directors from Glenmore Lodge or Plas y Brenin.

3.1 Summer training

Min. course size: 4, Max. course size; 18, Max. ratio: 1:6.

3.2 Winter training module 1

Min. course size: 4, Max. course size; 18, Max. ratio: 1:6.

3.3 Winter training module 2

Min. course size 4, Max course size; 18, Max. ratio: 1:6

3.4 Summer assessment

Min. course size: 4, Max. course size; 16, Max. ratio: 1:4.

3.5 Winter assessment

Min. course size: 4, Max. course size; 16, Max. ratio: 1:4.

4. Awarding organisation

Mountain Training UK & Ireland

Syllabus and guidance notes



1. The mountain environment

1.1 Demonstrate a broad, working knowledge of the mountain environment worldwide and use it to inspire, enthuse and educate the group. This includes:

1.1.1 The natural mountain environment, in summer and winter, including flora, fauna, ecology, geology, geography, tracks and signs.

1.1.2 Mountain cultures, local history and plant and animal adaptations in the mountains.

1.1.3 Access to the mountains and their conservation and protection.

1.1.4 Local hut networks and access to these.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.7.)

Guidance

International Mountain Leaders should have a broad overview of UK and Ireland issues. From this platform, they should build their knowledge to a wider international perspective in both the summer and winter environment.

You should be aware of the current legal situation with regards to access and conservation in countries you intend to visit. Additionally, you should appreciate the impact of group activities on the mountain environment compared with individual use.

Walking is only one of the demands on the mountain environment. You should be aware of other uses in both summer and winter, some of which may have conflicting interests. As an International Mountain Leader you need to be sensitive to the lives, interests, customs and culture of the countries you visit and in which you work.

You need to be fully aware that any careless use of the mountain environment can conflict with conservation interests. These interests may well differ from country to country. The upland landscape can contain habitats which are very fragile and can be easily damaged. You need to be familiar with best practice with reference to conservation for the country in which you are operating.

An International Mountain Leader should have a keen interest in all aspects of the environment and should be able to demonstrate how this knowledge is interconnected within the mountain environment.

Key practice points

- Experiment with different methods of engaging groups with the landscape in both summer and winter.
- Increase your environmental awareness and knowledge through further training on courses and workshops.
- Read widely from varied books and online sources about environmental topics.



Chapter 3 Environmental issues



2. Legal and economic considerations

2.1 Demonstrate legal and economic understanding appropriate to an International Mountain Leader operating in an employed, self-employed and voluntary capacity. This includes:

2.1.1 The legal basis for the regulation of the profession.

2.1.2 Mobility of an International Mountain Leader between countries and understanding of regulation of the profession in some countries.

2.1.3 Access and restrictions of access in mountain areas, national parks, nature reserves or protected areas etc.

2.1.4 Taxation and social security as it applies to the profession.

2.1.5 Professional responsibilities and legal requirements.

2.1.6 Personal and liability insurance.

2.1.7 The economic environment in which mountain professionals operate.

2.1.8 Methods of marketing.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.13.)

Guidance

International Mountain Leaders should have a broad overview of the legal responsibilities of a Mountain Leader within the UK and Ireland. This should act as a platform on which to build an awareness and basic understanding of the differences between countries worldwide.

The legal and professional obligations required to work as an International Mountain Leader can differ greatly to the UK and Ireland and from country to country. Some countries require by law that any person operating as an International Mountain Leader needs to hold not only the recognised qualification but also fulfil other legal requirements to be allowed to work. These may not be immediately obvious and should be researched alongside any local requirements that may exist.

You need to develop a clear understanding of the moral and legal implications of your management of risk when working with children, adults and mixed groups. You should understand the concepts of risk management that underpin the legal framework within the country in which you are working. Additionally, you must appreciate that you may be

legally bound to the laws of the country in which any contracts have been agreed.

Concepts such as 'duty of care' and principles such as 'in loco parentis' or the 'volenti non fit injuria' clause have practical implications when working in the UK and overseas. You should understand these at both a personal and professional level. The law varies from country to country so it is important for a leader to know where to access regulations and guidelines.

The Professional Mountaineer magazine is a regular source of informative articles and Mountain Training's publications such as International Mountain Trekking, Hill Walking and Winter Skills are recommended reading for all International Mountain Leaders.

The importance of keeping accurate records before, during and after leading groups overseas should be recognised, particularly in relation to incidents or accidents. Knowledge of what is covered by liability insurance, travel insurance and reciprocal health care agreements (if available) is essential for you and so you can advise your group.

Other regulations that may affect your profession include the package travel, package holidays and package tour regulations, or minibus driving regulations. Where these affect you, it is your responsibility to expand your knowledge.

As an International Mountain Leader you may be engaged within an organisation as a Technical Advisor. Local authorities and organisations are increasingly calling upon the services of International Mountain Leaders to act in this role. In addition, courts may occasionally require their services as an expert witness. It is of the utmost importance that as an International Mountain Leader you fully appreciate the responsibilities and possible repercussions of your work in this role.



Chapter 2 Planning your trip

Chapter 11 Dealing with problems while travelling

Key practice points

- Spend time researching current relevant legislation in countries you may visit. Engaging with other International Mountain Leaders/BAIML members can be really beneficial.
- Remain current with regards to accidents and incidents through the Health and Safety Executive and overseas test cases.
- Research the practical implications of the legal concepts of 'duty of care', 'in loco parentis' and 'volenti non fit injuria' whilst operating outside the UK and Ireland.
- Read Mountain Training's Who can lead, instructor or coach page.



3. Group management, leadership and decision-making

In addition to the leadership competencies defined in the Mountain Leader syllabus, International Mountain Leaders will be able to:

3.1 Lead, manage and enthuse a group in the mountain environment, whilst managing the objective and subjective hazards.

3.2 Prepare and adapt appropriate itineraries for a range of groups to suit different abilities, expectations and conditions.

3.3 Advise on suitable clothing, footwear and equipment for the conditions and trip.

3.4 Demonstrate an understanding of group psychology and strategies to avoid and manage disagreements within a group.

3.5 Communicate at a basic level in a foreign language to arrange and manage trip logistics, or know where to find and use appropriate tools to aid this.

3.6 Understand potential safeguarding issues and avoid inappropriate situations, including those in foreign and unfamiliar social environments and particularly with minors and vulnerable adults.

3.7 Manage a group in the case of an accident.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.4.)

Guidance

As an International Mountain Leader, your primary role is the safety and wellbeing of the group throughout a journey. It is not possible to separate the skills of group management and leadership from the technical skills and experience that are required to be an International Mountain Leader.

The overall responsibilities of a leader in the UK, Ireland and overseas are the same; however, the setting may be more challenging and remote. Differences in terrain, climate, wildlife, language, food and customs as well as coping with developing world variations in transport and communications will all add to the challenge. Skills in the local language will help. Multi-lingual leaders are not only able to give their clients a more informed experience but may also have the ability to communicate with local agents, service providers and residents. This could be important when dealing with group-related incidents.

You will often have overall responsibility for the group members for an extended period whilst travelling and will need to ensure all relevant safety considerations have been addressed. You will also have responsibilities to the environment and, if relevant, to parents and employers. It is important that you are fully aware of these responsibilities as well as the laws relating to them while operating in that country.

Underpinning the role of a leader are the values, beliefs, and ethos that shape every individual's view of what leadership is and in turn shape their leadership behaviours. All leaders have preferred behaviours and personality traits which impact their leadership styles. Likewise, individuals within a group may have their own leadership behaviour preferences. Leaders will need to be adaptable in behaviour and leadership to balance the needs of both the situation and the group – this is called the required behaviour.

The 'Vision, Support, Challenge' model of transformational leadership provides a framework that leaders can use to plan, execute, monitor and review their leadership behaviours. In this way, groups who receive the right balance of the three categories can be encouraged to perform beyond their own expectations.

Key practice points

- Actively seek feedback from groups you lead; have you applied the vision, support, challenge model in your leadership practice?

Summer

- Select appropriate equipment and be proficient at using the equipment to manage clients in the summer environment e.g. rope, slings and karabiners.

- Set an appropriate pace to manage clients efficiently through the day and appropriate to the terrain.

Winter

- Set a winter track on snow shoes selecting an appropriate angle and terrain for the client group.
- Understand and be able to apply the principles of 'safe travel' through winter terrain.
- Select appropriate equipment and be proficient at using the equipment to manage clients in the winter environment e.g. rope, ice axe, transceiver, probe and shovel.



4. Teaching

4.1 Teach others and promote learning to ensure the safe enjoyment of summer and winter walking as well as an appreciation of the mountain environment, sustainability and environmental impact.

4.2 Identify appropriate skills and deliver basic structured tuition appropriate to individual and group experience and goals.

4.3 Demonstrate an ability to adapt the teaching style to meet group needs.

4.4 Identify and use appropriate tasks to develop safe group activity.

4.5 Demonstrate an understanding of the reasons for evaluating a journey and success of the outcome.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.6.)

Guidance

Candidates are expected to be able to impart fundamental technical skills, such as movement on steep or loose ground, avalanche awareness and winter walking skills to support the group in completing a successful walk, as well as enthuse and educate on the environment. International Mountain Leaders need to create an environment of trust and confidence within their group so that participants feel relaxed and comfortable to tackle new activities and ask questions.

Age, ability, individual requirements, confidence and energy levels amongst the group will require different approaches to achieve success. Good communication skills are key. The ability to create rapport, communicate at an appropriate level, use positive language, provide a variety of demonstration techniques, check for understanding through skilled questioning and give useful feedback and encouragement to individuals are the foundations of effective teaching.

In addition to these communication skills, effective teaching requires International Mountain Leaders to be able to observe and assess participants' abilities, confidence levels and group dynamics, adapting their approach accordingly.

The 'must know' basic teaching strategies include:

- Emphasis on good, solid demonstrations that ensure that the leader is seen as an expert model for the technique.
- Choosing suitable safe terrain to demonstrate and allow group members to practise appropriate techniques.
- Using an appropriate teaching model to deliver a structured progressive session to a group, for example a simple teaching model like Plan Do Review, or IDEAS- Introduction; Demonstration; Explanation; Activity; Summary.

In many situations, International Mountain Leaders are also storytellers, for example in conveying information about local culture, history, legends and folklore.



See all Leader's Information boxes

Key practice points

- All subject areas should be well researched, prepared and structured and delivered in a confident style that engages and educates the audience.

Summer:

- Seek opportunities to observe experienced International Mountain Leaders working with clients on summer trekking routes.
- Develop techniques to coach clients on their movement skills in mountainous terrain, including negotiating sections of fixed equipment, summer snow patches and steep or loose ground.

Winter:

- Practise and become proficient at delivering a fifteen-minute transceiver, probe and shovel (TPS) session to a novice group on snowshoes.
- Seek opportunities to observe experienced International Mountain Leaders working with clients in the winter on snowshoes.
- Develop techniques to coach clients on their movement skills on snowshoes, using walking poles, TPS and GPS units.



5. Anatomy and physiology

5.1 Demonstrate an understanding of anatomy and physiology and how it relates to walking activities in mountainous country. This includes:

5.1.1 Physical preparation for hiking and advising clients (including children) on preparation.

5.1.2 Diet, nutrition and hydration.

5.1.3 Characteristics of mountain exercise.

5.1.4 Preventing injuries.

5.1.5 Tiredness and recuperation.

5.1.6 The effects of altitude, the process of acclimatisation and treatment of altitude illness.

5.1.7 The effects of cold and heat.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.9.)

Guidance

You should have a clear understanding of the effects of exercising in both summer and winter mountain environments. Physical and environmental factors contrive to sap the body of its resources, and you should have the knowledge to keep yourself and your clients physically and mentally well during and after an excursion.

You should have a reasonable knowledge of injury prevention such as foot, ankle and knee care and avoidance of sunburn and dehydration.

In winter, there are additional issues such as hypothermia, cold injuries and snow blindness. You should be able to advise clients on the appropriate journey for their experience and fitness levels and understand how to manage tiredness. Management of rests, food, fluids and pace is essential. You must be aware of the energy wastage associated with heavy and inappropriate equipment and be able to inform and advise on alternatives.

Knowledge of nutrition and hydration for exercise in different climates is essential. Balancing nutrition intake at the right times, before, during and after exercise, along with the suitability of liquids enables clients to continue performing over long periods of time. Managing this intake and being sympathetic to individual diets requires good coaching and leadership.

A good knowledge of the effects of altitude and the prevention of altitude-related conditions such as Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), High Altitude Cerebral Oedema (HACE) and High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema (HAPE) is required. Sound planning within modern protocols prevents most altitude problems. Early recognition of signs and symptoms with immediate preventative measures can avoid further deterioration of the condition and is a crucial factor in successful recovery. Other environments can also require specialised knowledge, such as prevention of infection in tropical climates and an awareness of hazards presented by local wildlife.



Chapter 4 Staying healthy

Chapter 5 Trekking at altitude

Key practice points

- Attend CPD or additional training opportunities organised by the relevant professional association e.g. BAIML.
- There is a good body of literature on altitude illness, read the books and articles recommended by your trainers.



6. Physical ability and movement skills

6.1 Demonstrate a high level of physical fitness and be able to sustain significant, physical effort over a prolonged period while leading a group.

6.2 Be comfortable moving over rough or difficult terrain and instructing clients on how to move safely.

6.3 Walk a snow-free route for a period of 6 hours, including a distance of 10 km and an ascent of 1500m, while carrying a rucksack with a minimum weight of 8kg, whilst demonstrating efficiency of movement, agility and balance on varied terrain.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.12.)

Guidance

It is essential that you have a high level of mountain fitness and the ability to move smoothly through mountainous terrain in a range of conditions in both the summer and winter. As a leader you are required to be able to move with confidence and agility across a variety of terrain including scree, rock, mountain vegetation and exposed slopes with or without snow on the ground. In winter, you should move over a range of snow conditions in your snowshoes with confidence and agility. You need to be able to inspire and lead groups across this terrain and be able to move quickly and efficiently in case of safety concerns or to deal with incidents.

The test of fitness is assessed on an ongoing basis during the assessment courses. In summer the assessment may take place up to an altitude of approximately 3,000m. Therefore you should be mindful of the effect of altitude on your performance when preparing for these assessments.

The test of agility is assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the assessment courses. You are expected to show a consistent, balanced and agile performance on all terrain within the International Mountain Leader remit. You should clearly be operating well within your personal competency throughout the assessment. Practical guidance and demonstration of this ability is given during the training courses.

Key practice points

Summer

- Identify the types of terrain over which you could improve your efficiency and visit such terrain during your consolidation period.
- Evaluate your level of fitness against 6.3 above, and allow time to improve this if

necessary. It equates to walking at a rate of 10m of ascent per minute and 4km per hour, with 10 minutes per hour for breaks.

Winter

- Gain personal experience of a range of snow conditions throughout a winter season(s).
- Practise breaking trail in deep snow or dealing with a breakable crust; a high degree of mountain fitness is required.
- Monitor, and if required, improve your level of fitness in order to move at a comfortable pace in all snow conditions.



7. Navigation and planning

7.1 Plan routes and navigate accurately and efficiently using a variety of maps in all conditions in both the summer and winter environment.

7.2 Choose from a range of techniques and select those that are appropriate to the terrain and conditions. They should be able to:

7.2.1 Plan routes and navigate with topographic maps of various type, scale and contour interval.

7.2.2 Relate the map to the ground and vice versa.

7.2.3 Use a compass, altimeter and GPS-enabled device.

7.2.4 Use a variety of digital mapping resources.

7.2.5 Demonstrate how to make use of a range of navigation techniques and strategies.

7.2.6 Measure distance on the map and distance travelled on the ground.

7.2.7 Plan routes and demonstrate methods of recording routes.

7.2.8 Navigate quickly and efficiently under a time constraint.

7.2.9 Relocate efficiently.

7.2.10 Demonstrate general route-finding skills on the ground in poorly-mapped terrain.

7.2.11 Make use of navigation skills such as interpreting the terrain from the map to manage avalanche risk.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.2.)

Guidance

Mountain Leaders are required to have a mastery of navigation such that they should be able to locate any feature on a map or in the terrain and relocate in any hill or mountain location, in any summer conditions.

In addition to the above, International Mountain Leaders need to navigate confidently and accurately while using a wide range of international maps, and be fluent in the use of altimeters, digital mapping, and GPS-enabled devices such as phones, watches and GPS units. IMLs should be familiar with the variety of digital mapping overlays available to them to aid in planning and terrain consideration, particularly on snow covered terrain. They should endeavour to remain up to date as commonly used digital mapping technology develops.

Timed navigation test

In addition to the navigational skills required within the everyday leadership of groups, all International Mountain Leader candidates, regardless of existing qualifications, are required to pass the Timed Navigation Test prior to attending the Summer Assessment

course. This is an integral part of the Summer Training course, but may be taken separately if necessary, for example if a reassessment is required. You should be able to navigate efficiently, competently and confidently at Mountain Leader standard (see Appendix 3A).

The timed navigation test requires you to move efficiently and at speed across mountainous terrain. You should be physically fit to complete the test and with well practised micro navigation techniques.

Key practice points

- Spend time navigating on and off paths in poor visibility, darkness, and in difficult conditions such as wind or heavy precipitation.
- Try out a range of mapping and hiking apps to better understand their features such as ready-made routes, terrain preferences, elevation profiles, and overlays such as slope angle to assist with avalanche terrain identification.
- Learn how to make use of GPX files both as a planning tool, a navigation aid and to record and store routes.
- Make use of contour-only maps to develop your confidence.
- Make a habit of reading the avalanche report for different countries and using a map to identify risk areas.



8. Weather

8.1 Demonstrate an elementary understanding of weather and its effects. This should include:

8.1.1 Weather systems and interpreting weather forecasts.

8.1.2 Weather maps including synoptic charts.

8.1.3 Using basic weather instruments such as altimeter and thermometer, digital weather mapping and natural signs to aid in practical forecasting.

8.2 Explain specific aspects of mountain weather and of interpreting weather forecasts in the mountains.

8.3 Describe the influence of weather on a group travelling in the mountains and be able to manage situations such as strong winds and electrical storms.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.10.)

Guidance

An International Mountain Leader needs to consider the implications of different weather patterns and how these may affect route choice and group care issues in both the summer and winter environments. This should include having knowledge of both continental and maritime climates and how these can affect mountain weather patterns.

International Mountain Leaders should be able to source up-to-date relevant information and re-evaluate this on the hill, from observations and other information gathered from a variety of suitable media.

They should be capable of interpreting the weather and avalanche forecasts and applying this information to safe route choices. In addition, they should understand the effects of the weather on snow conditions and stability under foot with the aim of providing a positive experience for clients.



Chapter 8 Weather

Key practice points

Summer

- Source weather forecasts for different mountain regions and practise interpreting them and designing appropriate, enjoyable journeys for a variety of groups.
- Increase your awareness of websites and apps that are widely available to help you monitor current in-country weather conditions.

Winter:

- Consider
  - The effect of weather and snow conditions on the overall snowpack stability.
  - The application of weather and snowpack information to allow safe route choice, recognising starting zones, avalanche tracks and deposition zones.
- Follow the snow and weather conditions throughout the winter season, tracking the history of the snowpack.
- Familiarise yourself with different countries'/continents' variability in avalanche forecasting and the common avalanche danger patterns.
- Make sure you are aware of the various websites and apps that are widely available to help monitor current in-country avalanche conditions.



9. Security in mountainous terrain

9.1 Demonstrate the ability to manage and safeguard a group and individuals and ensure safe travel in varied mountainous terrain including steep ground. They should be able to:

9.1.1 Assess the terrain and conditions, plan suitable activities and make sound decisions to manage risk.

9.1.2 Manage a group under changing weather conditions.

9.1.3 Recognise and manage water hazards.

9.1.4 Describe basic glacier dynamics and manage the dangers that glaciers pose, the hazards present in their vicinity and in post-glacial terrain.

9.2 Unexpected situations may arise where the rope is required to safeguard members of the group. International Mountain Leaders should demonstrate safe and appropriate use of a rope, slings and karabiners. They should have the ability to:

9.2.1 Explain the suitability and limitations of different types, diameters and lengths of rope .

9.2.2 Demonstrate safe use of knots and friction hitches.

9.2.3 Select and use safe anchors and appropriate methods of belaying.

9.2.4 Demonstrate safe travel on different types of fixed equipment and ways in which these can be safeguarded.

9.2.5 Safeguard short, rocky steps in ascent or decent with or without fixed equipment.

9.2.6 Safeguard a short section of traverse with or without fixed equipment.

9.2.7 Safeguard a section where the fixed equipment is broken or missing.

9.2.8 Safeguard a traverse, ascent or descent, of an unexpected snow patch.

9.2.9 Demonstrate the ability to confidence-rope one group member and the judgement of when this is appropriate.

9.2.10 Improvise with limited equipment to safeguard the group.

9.3 Demonstrate efficient application, in winter, of:

9.3.1 The suitability and limitation of different types, diameters and lengths of rope.

9.3.2 Appropriate knots and friction hitches.

9.3.3 Choice of winter anchors and appropriate belaying methods.

9.3.4 Safeguarding short snow slopes in ascent and descent using roped and un-roped methods.

9.3.5 Improvisation with limited equipment to safeguard the group.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.1.)

Guidance

An International Mountain leader will be able to identify and manage common environmental, water and terrain hazards encountered on a mountain journey. In mountainous terrain, where the topography is rugged, steep, and/or consequential, International Mountain Leaders typically operate on footpaths or marked trails. On such footpaths, there may also be sections of fixed equipment or passages where hands may be needed for balance. It may also be necessary to negotiate sections of missing footpath.

International Mountain Leaders need to be able to operate safely in this terrain, and should have spent time developing good judgement and decision-making skills that enable them to choose routes through steep ground. Unexpected situations may arise where the rope is required to safeguard members of the group. This relies on the leader's ability to make accurate risk assessments for the terrain, conditions and the risk to group members and/or others, combined with an awareness of the use and limitations of a rope. Leaders should be ready to adjust plans or stop an activity when equipment and techniques needed are beyond their competence.

Environmental mountain factors including loose rock, animals, flooding and lightning are all potentially hazardous. International Mountain Leaders should be able to use careful judgement to avoid these and know how to deal with them as required.

As an International Mountain Leader you may encounter a variety of water hazards including rivers, streams, marshes, lakes and flash-flood zones. Although you should endeavour to avoid these hazards, you should still be familiar with and demonstrate the skills and safety procedures to safeguard yourself and others.

General glacier travel is beyond the scope of the International Mountain Leader. Glaciers

may only be crossed where they form part of a nationally or internationally accepted and waymarked walking route and where the use of a harness and rope is not necessary. Such glacier terrain is flat or of a very gentle gradient and can easily be walked across, is free from dangers such as plunge-holes or hidden crevasses. The International Mountain Leader should understand and respects national regulations regarding leading people on glaciers.

Many walking routes pass through glaciated terrain, often passing close to glaciers, and the International Mountain Leader should have a basic understanding of how glaciers are formed, how they flow and retreat as well as the hazards at glacial margins, and in post-glacial terrain. Such hazards include ice collapse, rock fall, landslides, glacier lake outburst floods and debris flow. International Mountain leaders should be aware that even recently stable, waymarked and generally accepted glacier crossings can change and become unsafe.



Chapter 7 Trekking hazards

Chapter 11 Dealing with problems while travelling

Key practice points

- Gain experience on a wide variety of different types of fixed equipment.
- Be proficient and confident at handling the rope, slings and karabiners.
- Consider attending CPD events or additional courses to enhance your understanding.
- Develop safe and efficient techniques to safeguard clients in summer and winter.



10. First aid and emergency procedures

10.1 Demonstrate knowledge and competence in first aid, medical assistance and emergency procedures such that they may operate unassisted in remote and isolated areas. The skills and knowledge must include:

10.1.1 Procedures in the event of an accident.

10.1.2 Basic first aid including casualty assessment, CPR, use of AEDs and accident management.

10.1.3 First aid in mountain environments and scenarios in both summer and winter conditions.

10.1.4 Contents of an individual and group first aid kit.

10.1.5 Recognition, treatment and immediate actions for exhaustion, dehydration, hypothermia, cold injury, snow-blindness, and the effects of heat including sunburn.

10.1.6 Recognition and treatment of altitude illness, including Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), High Altitude Cerebral Oedema (HACE) and High Altituide Pulmonary Oedema (HAPE).

10.1.7 Treatment and management of burns, cuts, animal bites and stings.

10.1.8 Methods of getting assistance and evacuation.

10.1.9 Management and organisation of a rescue (both improvised and by official rescue services).

10.1.10 The use of appropriate communication equipment, including mobile and satellite messaging and telephones, radios, and personal location beacons.

10.1.11 Basic communication in a foreign language for rescue purposes.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.3.)

Guidance

International Mountain Leaders should have the knowledge, skills and confidence to take responsibility for dealing with incidents and accidents as well as organising and managing rescues in mountainous and remote areas. Being well-prepared is key, with meticulous planning and pre-trip research should include knowing escape routes, points

of communication and options for rescue. Information gathered about the group members should include their previous experience, medical history, and two next of kin contacts.

Knowledge of how to raise the alarm in different countries is vital, and may include contacting the nearest hut guardian, direct communications by mobile phone or radio to the rescue coordination centre or by sending a runner to the nearest point of contact, which could be days away. Preparation again is the key with all essential phone numbers, protocols and key rescue words translated.

Be aware of other communication systems that could be used in more remote places e.g. radios, satellite phones, Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs), SPOT/In-Reach devices etc.



Chapter 7 Trekking hazards

Chapter 11 Dealing with problems while travelling

Key practice points

- Create an Emergency Management Plan that travels with you and contains contact numbers for emergency services, in-country agencies, embassies, insurers as well as the client information.
- Keep up to date with methods of organising groups with respect to helicopters.
- Make you sure you know the relevant in-country international distress signals.



11. Mountain survival and shelters

11.1 Organise and assure the wellbeing and safety of the group without external support in unexpected circumstances such as fatigue, injury, benightment or adverse weather. This must include the ability to:

11.1.1 Construct or erect an improvised shelter efficiently, in both summer and snow-covered (winter) conditions.

11.1.2 Demonstrate an understanding of different shelter types and their suitability and efficiency in different ground conditions, including group shelters.

11.1.3 Make use of naturally occurring resources, for example shelter under fir trees.

11.1.4 Look after the group and themselves in challenging conditions.

11.1.5 Make sound decisions regarding survival including the need for immediate shelter, warming, fuelling, hydration and evacuation.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.11.)

Guidance

You should have a rounded set of survival and bivouac skills in order to cope with the wide-ranging scenarios which International Mountain Leaders may face. These skills include planned and unplanned bivouac situations in summer conditions and unplanned emergency bivouacs in winter conditions. This may involve the construction of emergency snow shelters appropriate to the terrain and prevailing conditions.

You should be able to construct an emergency shelter to protect the party from wind and precipitation. Construction of snow hole and shovel-up shelters should be practised at training, and you should be able to demonstrate the ability to make effective use of a combination of a snow shelter and emergency equipment during an assessment.

It is strongly recommended that you obtain logged experience of bivouacking in summer and winter conditions before attending the winter assessment and should be prepared for this eventuality during the assessment. However, it is at the discretion of the assessor and course director to decide how much time needs to be spent in the shelter in order to assess this competence satisfactorily. Candidates should be aware of the hazards posed by snowholes in thaw conditions and significant snow fall whether due to wind and/or current precipitation. In the context of this qualification, snow holing should be regarded as a last resort rather than as an activity in its own right.



Chapter 9 Snow - a seasonal approach

Chapter 10 Snowshoeing

Key practice points

- While gaining experience in summer and winter conditions, practise constructing different types of shelters in a range of environments, including emergency snow shelters.



12. Multi-day activities, treks and expeditions

12.1 Organise, manage the logistics of, and lead planned multi-day activities in the mountains in both summer and winter conditions, including campcraft, hygiene, and food and drink provisions, as well as advise clients on suitable preparation and equipment for a given trip.

12.2 Look after themselves and their group including managing appropriate accommodation or shelter such as the use of staffed and unstaffed mountain huts, refuges, tea houses, and camping with tents or tarps or similar.

12.3 Describe national and local regulations regarding wild camping and fires, particularly in national parks or nature protection areas. In areas where wild camping is possible,

International Mountain Leaders must understand the ethos of making camp at dusk and breaking camp at dawn and ‘leave-no-trace’ in general.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.14.)

Guidance

International Mountain Leaders should be competent in the organisation of multi-day trips and journeys, whether hut-based or using alternative accommodation. This may involve arrangement of transport, equipment, food requirements and accommodation in a foreign language. The use of language crib cards, phrasebooks or translation apps will often be necessary. When organising expeditions consideration should be given to cultural differences within the chosen country.

International Mountain Leaders should gain experience of multi-day self-supported journeys in mountain terrain during both summer and winter conditions.

Key practice points

- Practise planning a multi-day journey in snow-covered terrain that avoids avalanche-threatened zones with options to adjust the route according to conditions
- Practise planning journeys taking into consideration the cultural differences, seasonal local weather systems, the trekking season and the altitude ascent profile.



13. Snow, avalanche hazard and route planning

13.1 Know where to source and demonstrate an understanding of avalanche forecasts, the nature of the forecasted avalanche hazard and the weather influence on them.

13.2 Be able to use the avalanche forecast to identify on the map terrain that is likely to present an avalanche hazard and use this to create a route plan that avoids hazard.

13.3 Create route plans appropriate to the group and prevailing conditions.

13.4 Make appropriate terrain choices, and route plan adjustments based on observations throughout the journey.

13.5 On the journey identify terrain that may pose an avalanche hazard.

13.6 Demonstrate an understanding of snowpack structure and how snow grain and weak layer combinations can contribute to instability.

13.7 Demonstrate effective use of avalanche transceiver, probe and shovel. This should include:

- 13.7.1 Transceiver carrying methods, battery and function checks, and group checks.
- 13.7.2 Avalanche search methods including a timed transceiver search to identify the location of two transceivers inside separate bags in under eight minutes..
- 13.7.3 Effective probing methods and shovelling techniques.
- 13.7.4 Teaching a group basic use of avalanche safety equipment to enable a companion rescue.

13.8 Demonstrate an understanding of immediate first aid appropriate to an avalanche casualty.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.14.)

Guidance

The International Mountain Leader must understand snow and avalanche hazards, including avalanche forecasting, to be able to lead groups safely in the winter environment and choose appropriate terrain for the activity of walking (hiking and trekking). Familiarise yourself with the Be Avalanche Aware process and how it is used at each stage.

In areas where there is no avalanche forecast available, you must have the skills to be able to operate and lead groups safely, and should understand the difference between continental, maritime and transitional snowpacks.



Part 3 Snow and avalanche

Key practice points

- Practise the timed transceiver search test as per the definition in the appendix and consider efficient digging techniques.
- Understand and be proficient at using a range of modern transceivers; using group check and mark functions.
- Consider how a typical snowpack may differ in different mountainous areas, for example how Scotland differs to the Alps or the Greater Ranges.
- Understand the avalanche hazard levels used in the forecasts. Take time to read and comprehend the detail in the forecasts.
- Research human factors in decision-making and apply strategies in your own practice to mitigate the negative impact of these factors on your and your group's decision-making.
- After every journey ensure you review the effectiveness of your decision-making.



14. Movement and safety on snow-covered terrain

14.1 Demonstrate an understanding of how terrain, underfoot snow conditions, slope angle and exposure/runout will influence route planning and route choice for a group of walkers.

14.2 Demonstrate an ability to lead a group in difficult conditions such as cold, high winds, whiteout or darkness.

14.3 Select and demonstrate safe use and limitations of (personal safety) equipment, for both the leader and the group that is appropriate to the terrain and snow conditions. This should include:

- 14.3.1 Footwear
- 14.3.2 Foot traction devices
- 14.3.3 Walking poles
- 14.3.4 Ice axe

14.4 Explain the benefits and limitations of different safety equipment on various hardnesses of snow and slope angle.

14.5 Demonstrate good technique and movement skills on various hardnesses of snow and slope angles. This should include (for example):

- 14.5.1 Kicking steps with boots only.
- 14.5.2 Boots plus walking poles or ice axe.
- 14.5.3 Boots with various foot-traction devices plus walking poles or ice axe.

14.6 Demonstrate effective teaching of movement techniques to clients.

14.7 Demonstrate and teach techniques to control, slow and stop a slide using body position only (i.e. without an axe) on appropriate terrain and snow conditions.

14.8 Demonstrate how to cut a channel and a variety of types of steps to allow clients to safely cross a section of hard snow such as a snow-filled gully that may be blocking a footpath.

14.9 Demonstrate how to construct and make use of a variety of snow anchors in order to support a member of the group with the rope or for the leader to descend a short steep section of snow.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.16.)

Guidance

International Mountain Leaders must have a working knowledge of movement in snow-covered terrain, the additional hazards present, and the techniques and equipment needed to travel safely. This may include travel on snowshoes and the use of avalanche safety equipment as appropriate to the terrain and conditions.

Issuing personal safety equipment to clients must not encourage exposure to more technical or consequential terrain, or progression into terrain where the hazards are incompatible with the activity of walking (hiking and trekking).



Chapter 9 Snow - a seasonal approach

Key practice points:

- Practise moving with agility and confidence over summer snow patches and be able to demonstrate a range of techniques to manage summer snow patches to safeguard the group. This may include using the ice axe and/or the rope.
- Practise your personal movement using various combinations of walking poles/axe and foot traction devices on a variety of terrain, for example hard snow, soft snow, icy snow, snow-covered rock, mixed ground (ice, turf, snow and rock).



15. Movement and safety on icy terrain

15.1 Manage a group safely over icy terrain such as surfaces with glaze ice (verglas) or frozen water for example car parks, roadside walkways, footpaths flooded with water and frozen waterways.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.16.)

Guidance:

For this purpose, the IML may issue and teach the use of appropriate safety equipment such as foot traction devices. Within the scope of this common standard, the angle of this terrain is always minimal, and clients can move otherwise unaided or with the support of walking poles. The terrain is never exposed or consequential.

Key practice points:

- Practise your personal movement on a wide range of icy surfaces with different footwear and traction devices



16. Travel risk management, emergency planning and incident reporting

16.1 Explain the concept of hazards and risk, and decision-making processes to reduce exposure to and severity of risks to themselves and their group.

16.2 Demonstrate travel risk management by identifying threats to their logistics, to themselves, and to their group both in the planning phase and while travelling.

16.3 Create a travel risk management plan and explain that threats do not only come from the mountain environment.

16.4 Explain the impact of human factors on decision-making.

16.5 Make dynamic risk assessments and act accordingly for the safety of themselves and their group.

16.6 Describe hazards caused by climate change, glacier recession and extreme weather patterns.

16.7 Make emergency (contingency) plans.

16.8 Demonstrate a clear understanding of the concept of 'near-misses' and how and where to record incidents, for example, via their national association.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.5.)

Guidance:

An understanding of travel risk management is crucial for an International Mountain Leader because it allows them to effectively assess and mitigate potential dangers in diverse environments across different countries, ensuring the safety and well-being of their clients by proactively planning for weather fluctuations, political instability, local customs, medical emergencies, and other hazards unique to each region, ultimately upholding their duty of care as a responsible International Mountain Leader.



Chapter 11 Dealing with problems while travelling

Key practice points:

- Develop a travel risk management strategy for the trips you plan to lead.
- Review a recent trip and consider the human factors at play in the decisions you made.



17. Sustainability, environmental awareness and minimum impact

17.1 Be an advocate of the UIMLA Sustainability and Environmental policy.

17.2 Consider the environmental impact of the travel they and their clients undertake, the accommodation and equipment they use and the food they consume with their groups.

17.3 Educate clients and groups about the fragility of mountain ecosystems and the importance of minimising impact during guided activities, including the leave-no-trace ethos.

17.4 Express respect for local cultures and the local people they meet.

17.5 Educate clients in ethics, for example asking permission before taking photographs of local people.

(This syllabus section is equivalent to UIMLA 2024 standard section 3.8.)

Guidance:

International Mountain Leaders recognise the importance of preserving the natural environment and supporting sustainable practises in mountain regions and in mountain

tourism. UIMLA recommends International Mountain Leaders make sustainability a priority in their work, and they are expected to consider the environmental impact of key aspects of their operation.

As a rule, International Mountain Leaders should always select the least environmentally damaging way of travelling and prioritise low carbon tours and more sustainable accommodation choices.

During multi-day treks in the high mountains, whenever possible, use mountain hut accommodation as an alternative to wild camping. The impact is less and it supports the owner to maintain the hut.

Wild camping is accepted in many countries, tolerated in others and forbidden in some. If wild camping does take place, everybody should follow the Leave No Trace principles:

- Plan and prepare.
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
- Dispose of waste properly.
- Leave what you find.
- Minimize campfire impacts.
- Respect wildlife.
- Be considerate of other visitors.

International Mountain Leaders should help protect biodiversity, contribute to restoring it; protect vulnerable ecosystems and respect protected areas; stay on trails to reduce soil erosion; observe local rules and regulations.



Chapter 3 Environmental issues

Key practice points:

- Complete the Effective Climate Action e-learning course available in your online account.
- Prepare resources to use to start conversations on sustainability with clients during treks.

- Familiarise yourself with the UIMLA Sustainability and Environmental policy.
- Create your own sustainability policy and make use of carbon calculators to deliver realistic estimates.

Appendix 1 - Definitions

Quality International Summer Mountain Day

A quality international summer mountain day should be a mountain day outside of the UK and Ireland and include more than half of the following criteria:

- In an environment below 3000 metres, the day should include a height gain of approximately 1,000 metres.
- In an environment above 3,000 metres the day should include a height gain of approximately 300 metres.
- A journey of a minimum of five hours.
- Navigational skills should be used including the use of a map, compass, altimeter or GPS.
- Decision-making about route choice and judgement of terrain.
- Planning involving the use of a weather forecast.
- Ascending and/or descending steep broken ground.
- Negotiating sections of fixed equipment and/or small sections of snow as part of the normal mountain journey.
- Appreciating the environment and increasing one's environmental knowledge.

Quality UK Winter Mountain Day

A quality winter mountain day in the UK or Ireland should follow all the normal criteria for a quality winter day for the Winter Mountain Leader qualification, outlined below.

Although it is difficult to define such a unit of experience there are a number of common characteristics:

- The adversity of weather conditions, the changeable nature of the underfoot conditions, the requirement to navigate accurately and carry greater amounts of equipment etc all affect speed of movement and distance travelled.
- Winter quality mountain days are likely to be strenuous and reasonably demanding and will involve over five hours walking and/or climbing.

- Any winter climbing should be part of a longer mountain day and not the sole reason for the excursion.
- Winter quality mountain days should involve elements of planning, exploration of an unfamiliar locality, map reading/navigation and more than likely require the use of ice axe and crampons for security.
- Above all the experience should lead to feelings of accomplishment and satisfaction, even if enjoyment may occasionally be in retrospect!
- The ascent of a substantial peak would normally be included in the day.

The time of year alone, such as a January day when no snow or ice is present, or the presence of snow patches (e.g. on the Cairngorm plateau) on a sunny day in May do not qualify as quality winter mountain days, even though the day may satisfy the elements of length, navigation and exploration. The use of an axe and crampons on snow or ice does not necessarily constitute a winter quality mountain day.

Quality International Winter Mountain Day

A quality international winter mountain day should be a mountain day outside of the UK and Ireland, and include more than half of the following criteria:

- Must involve movement and travel on snow
- Must include ascent and/or descent
- A journey of a minimum of five hours
- Planning involving the use of weather and avalanche forecasts
- Navigational skills should be used, including the use of a map, compass, altimeter or GPS
- Making progress in poor or worsening weather conditions
- Decision-making about route choice and judgement of terrain
- Evaluating the snowpack and avalanche hazard throughout the day and making ongoing decisions based on these
- Appreciating the winter environment and increasing one's environmental knowledge
- Summer Alpine conditions on snowy terrain will not normally qualify as fulfilling enough of these criteria, apart from in exceptionally bad weather conditions.

Summer and winter conditions

The term ‘summer conditions’ is used to describe any conditions not covered by the term ‘winter conditions’.

‘Winter conditions’ can be defined as when winter conditions, including snow and ice, prevail or are forecast. This cannot be defined by a portion of the year, but appropriate weather conditions (e.g. cold air) should prevail. As a general principle the presence of snow patches does not in itself constitute winter conditions.

Mountaineering and Alpinism

Mountain Training UK & Ireland believe that for the walking leader the most helpful way to define the activity is provided by the equipment and skills required to adequately safeguard other members of the party against the hazard. If harness, ice axe, crampons, rope or perhaps helmet are foreseeable requirements at the planning stage then the activity is defined as mountaineering and therefore “Alpinism”. A rope is carried by the party for emergency use rather than an anticipated necessary item for managing safety. If the leader chooses to carry an ice-axe this should be regarded as a similar emergency tool. The decision to carry crampons implies a mountaineering expedition that is beyond the scope of this qualification.

Glacier travel

For the purposes of this award a glacier is defined as any permanent snowfield. Because snow and ice are drastically affected by climatic changes (both short and long term) it is not possible to apply a generic classification to specific glaciers or sections of glacier as this may change even over the course of a single trekking season. However there are a number of permanent ice-fields that generally lack characteristic glacial hazards. These hazards include the following:

- All wet glaciers i.e. a glacier with full or partial snow covering
- Any hazard that requires mountaineering equipment in order to safely manage, i.e. rope, ice-axe, crampons or harness.
- Any crevassed glacier where these cracks are anything more than very minor (less than a boot- width across). This would include a dry glacier with small but unavoidable neve-covered patches since these might conceal crevasses.
- Threat from serac avalanche.

- Steep sections of ice that can be anticipated to require step cutting e.g. in some seasons the terrain between Arolla's Pas de Chevre and the Dix glacier can represent a significant and predictable hazard.
- Way-marking is not in itself a satisfactory solution to negotiating a route threatened on either side by the above hazards since these are transient and can be misleading if conditions suddenly change.
- Surface water can be a significant hazard on dry glaciers. If the route crosses any water-course this might well require mountaineering tools (e.g. ice screws) in order to manage safely and this should therefore be regarded as out of remit. In any case the water-course should be treated as white-water with significant hazards associated with loss of footing, particularly moulins (plunge-holes).

Timed transceiver search

The transceiver search shall comprise correctly identifying the location of two transceivers inside separate bags that are buried in snow at a depth of 0.6 to 1m in under 8 minutes. The buried transceivers shall be placed 5 to 20m apart and ideally in terrain that has a gradient of approximately 5 to 15 degrees. It is not necessary to dig out the transceivers, but the bags must be located positively with a probe. The candidate should start the search out of range of the buried transceivers. The search area should be free from outside interference. The bags that the transceivers are buried in should protect the transceivers from damage (such as with a resilient plastic layer) but be a walking rucksack or similar.

Appendix 2 - History of BAIML and UIMLA

In 1993 the first British holders of the European Mountain Leader Award (EML) established the British Association of European Mountain Leaders (BAEML). A national association was required in order to fulfil responsibilities, including a code of conduct and insurance provision, to the Commission Européenne des Accompagnateurs en Montagne (CEAM). Only through membership of BAEML would British EML holders be validated to practise and have their qualification recognised within Europe.

UIMLA: In 2003 the various member countries of CEAM decided that for the qualification to gain greater unity and universal recognition it should have a more unified carnet, badge and identity. It was decided that a change of title from European to International would remove the barrier for non-European countries to join and also reflect the increasing number of qualified people leading treks in the Greater Ranges.

In 2004 at Plas y Brenin, The National Mountain Centre, CEAM changed its title to the 'Union of International Mountain Leader Associations '(UIMLA) and accepted a new constitution which included the adoption of a universal qualification name, carnet and badge. These changes were ratified at a ceremony held in Chambery, France on Saturday 27 November 2004 and signed by eight countries: Andorra, Belgium, France, Italy, Poland, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

BAIML: Following the formation of UIMLA, each member country agreed consequently to change its name and constitution. In the UK this was done in 2005 by a change in title for the British qualification and association from European Mountain Leader (EML) to International Mountain Leader (IML) and from British Association of European Mountain Leaders (BAEML) to British Association of International Mountain Leaders (BAIML). In 2012 – The revised UIMLA Standard,

Standard for access to and practice of the profession of the International Mountain Leader," was accepted at the Annual General Assembly of UIMLA.