

RBWM Expedition Guidelines (updated April 2025) - to be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of 'Guidance for Outdoor Educational Activities and Offsite Visits (2025-2028)'.

Leaders Qualifications

The LA believes that the best way of proving competence is by undertaking a recognised course of training and assessment:

- Countryside Leader Award <https://www.countrysideleaderaward.org/>
- Outdoor Leader Award Level 3 <https://www.sportsleaders.org/qualifications-programmes/expedition-leadership>
- Camping Leader, Lowland Leader Award (LLA), Hill and Moorland Leader Award (HMLA), and Mountain Leader Award (ML) (with Camping Module as required) <https://www.mountain-training.org/>
- It is also recognised that many leaders have significant experience but no formal qualification. These can be considered to be 'assistant supervisor' as below.

The leaders' qualifications need to be matched to the terrain in which the expedition teams will be working and for simplicity this terrain has been split into three distinct categories.

Terrain Level	Description of Terrain	Suggested Competence	Suggested First Aid
Lowland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walks must not cross any hazardous terrain (e.g. cliffs, very steep slopes, water hazards etc.). • Throughout the walk the group should never generally be more than 3km away from a key access point such as a car park, lay-by or populated area. • Any potential escape routes should also lie within the scope of the defined terrain for the Lowland Leader award. • Walks will require the ability to plan routes, use simple navigation skills using a map and compass and be self-sufficient. • Walks must follow paths or tracks that are both marked on a map and clearly visible on the ground and that do not require navigation across untracked areas. • Walks must use bridges or other recognised water crossing points. • Walks must only take place in summer conditions (i.e., when there is no unavoidable snow or ice on any part of the route). 	Countryside Leader Award (CLA) Outdoor Leader L3 (OL3) Lowland Leader Award (LLA)	16hrs Activity Specific Ideally 'First Aid at Work' as a minimum
Hill and Moorland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open, uncultivated, non-mountainous high or remote country known variously as upland, moor, bog, fell, hill or down. 		16 hr first aid course

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas enclosed by well-defined geographical or man-made boundaries such as classified roads (areas that merge with mountain regions and do not have well defined boundaries are excluded) • Areas of remoteness that are easily exited in a few hours, returning to a refuge or an accessible road. • Areas where movement on steep or rocky terrain is not required (in either a planned or unplanned situation) 	Hill and Moorland Leader Award (HML)	
Mountain	<p>For the purpose of the Mountain Leader scheme, 'mountainous country' may be defined as wild country which may contain unavoidable steep and rocky ground where walkers are dependent upon themselves for immediate help. In the United Kingdom and Ireland mountainous country includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snowdonia • Brecon Beacons • Lake District • Mountains of Mourne • Scottish Highlands • Galloway Hills • Cork & Kerry Mountains • Galway & Mayo Mountains • Donegal Mountains • Dublin & Wicklow Mountains 	Mountain Leader Award (ML)	16 hr first aid course

Ratios of Adults to Young People.

A minimum of 2 adults must accompany any expedition. If there are male & female participants, it is advisable to have a leader of each sex.

There is no stipulation as to what the ratio of qualified supervisors to expedition teams for school self-led expeditions, should be. Instead, schools will be encouraged to establish this themselves via the risk assessment (see National Guidance advice sheet 4.3b 'ratios and effective supervision'), with advice from the Outdoor Education Advisor if required. There must, however, be sufficient qualified and competent leaders in the field to cover all significant and reasonably foreseeable risks, particularly including cooking and the safe use of stoves, road and railway crossings, hazards posed by the proximity to water, and potential fire hazards in addition to stoves.

To aid them in this process schools should refer to OEAP National Guidance (www.oeapng.info) advice sheets:

- 4.3b ‘ratios and effective supervision’,
- 7.1k ‘unaccompanied expeditions’.
- 7.1b ‘Duke of Edinburgh’s Award expeditions’.
- 7.2i ‘Safety at the Water Margins’.
- 3.2d ‘approval of leaders’.
- 6h ‘FAQ adventure qualifications’.

A separate ‘acknowledgement of risk management’ checklist must be completed once by the lead supervisor at the start of each expedition season, and a copy attached to each Evolve submission.

Name	Responsibilities	Qualifications
Supervisor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Responsible for overseeing the safety of Expeditions. 2. Responsible for the standards of training. 3. Responsible for the management of the work of the Assistant Supervisors and any adult helpers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Governing Body qualification appropriate to the expedition. (e.g. CLA, OL3, HML, ML) 2. First Aid (see note) 3. Familiar with the area where expedition is taking place. 4. Have undertaken the DofE Expedition Supervisor Training Course (ESTC) <p>NB: the training component of WGL, HML, ML will be valid to supervise in non-remote terrain for a period of 2 years to allow time for assessment while not requiring duplication with a ‘lower’ qualification.</p>
Assistant Supervisor	<p>Works under the direction of the Approved Visit Leader. In an emergency may take over as the Visit Leader within the remit of their qualification / approval.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assist in the training of participants. 2. To support the AVL in the supervision of a team whilst on their expedition 3. To be able to act on own initiative should it be necessary 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working towards an appropriate qualification. 2. First Aid Certificate (See note) 3. Possess knowledge & understanding of leading visits (e.g., OEAP/local Visit Leader Course) 4. Familiarisation with the area in which the expedition is to take place. <p>Those leaders wishing to become Assistant Supervisors in Mountains as defined below must hold the qualification, CLA, OL3, WGL or HML.</p>

<p>Adult Helper</p>	<p>Works under the direction of the Visit Leader.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To contribute to the safety of the activity 2. To contribute to the training of Participants 3. To understand and be fully conversant with safety procedures. 	<p>Adjudged by the school/establishment EVC with advice from the Approved Visit Leader / Supervisor or Outdoor Education Adviser to be competent to support the activity.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possess knowledge & understanding of expeditions. 2. Possess knowledge & understanding of First Aid 3. Ideally should have a basic knowledge of the area
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First Aid

Comprehensive Guidance is here: <https://www.outdoor-learning.org/Good-Practice/Good-Practice/Guidance-for-Outdoor-First-Aid> . First Aid Qualifications should include CPR, Bleeding, Shock, Drowning, Hypo and Hyperthermia, Broken Bones and basic treatment of minor injuries.

Recruitment of Volunteers

RBWM/AfC will require any qualifications to be available for verification. It is policy that an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check must be undertaken, where regulated activity takes place, on all volunteers or to ensure that this process has been carried out by their employers.

Scope of Qualifications

All qualifications and terrain listed in the matrix above are for operation in summer conditions e.g., conditions other than snow & ice where specialist equipment for safe travel (use of ice-axes and crampons) is essential. Any leaders planning training or expeditions outside of these conditions must have achieved commensurate winter qualifications and submit risk assessments considering the potentially more hazardous conditions including shorter daylight hours etc.

Use of Stoves

It is of critical importance that training for, and supervision of stove usage (safe filling, cooking on, and storage of) is carried out only by those who have been assessed as competent to do so (normally as part of a recognised award such as ML, CLA, OL3, or or HMLA with the Mountain Training Camping Skills module), and only using the apparatus that they themselves have been trained and

RBWM/AfC Expedition Guidance April 2025 v1

assessed on such as gas, solid tablet (Hexamine) or Meths fuelled stoves. As a rule, and only in exceptional circumstances, young people should not use petrol or multi fuel pressure stoves.

Further Advice

For advice and guidance, please contact the Outdoor Education Advisor / 07968 832367

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