BMG
BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF MOUNTAIN GUIDES

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TRAINING SCHEME HANDBOOK

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PROSPECTUS

1 INTRODUCTION

The Guides' training scheme has been designed and developed so that the British Association of Mountain Guides (BMG) can offer a thorough training and assessment in all disciplines associated with the international guiding profession. The scheme complies with the platform document of the International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations (IFMGA). This document is not definitive, as any system should be prepared to modernise and adapt to new ideas and trends. The BMG system has considered the unique mountain environment of the UK and Ireland and the necessary associated skills. Completion of the UK elements of the scheme enables members to be involved in the whole range of mountaineering work in this country including other training and assessment schemes. Completing the full BMG training scheme and achieving the subsequent award of the International Mountain Guide qualification ensures that a member has parity of standards and benefits with other guides of member countries of the IFMGA.

All BMG members recognise and adhere to the international **Charter for the Mountain Guide**.

> "*Our reason for becoming a Mountain Guide can be derived from our appreciation of the beauty of the mountains, our acceptance of the risks entailed in mountaineering and the value we place on our partnership with other climbers. To achieve this a Mountain Guide needs to be clear-sighted, meticulous and demonstrate a professional attitude, commitment and appearance.*
>
> *We demonstrate our respect for the mountains by close co-operation with those who live and work there and with land management agencies. Our activities are carried out in a sensitive manner, in tune with the natural environment. Our acceptance of risk in the mountain environment presupposes alertness, prudence, self-knowledge, vigilance, current technical expertise and good equipment. The Guide offers loyalty to the contract with the client, aid to any climber in distress, the adoption of the highest safety standards, trust, and a spirit of good fellowship toward all peoples, mountain regions and countries".*

The BMG welcomes anyone committed to becoming a Guide and wishes them success in this profession. Every member is invited to contribute in time to the reputation, organisation and success of the British Mountain Guides.

2 ORGANISATION AND DELIVERY OF BMG TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT COURSES

The British Association of Mountain Guides appoints a Technical Director who is responsible to the association for the organisation and delivery of its training and assessment scheme. The Technical Director heads a committee composed of

experienced Guides from a range of geographical regions. The Technical Director appoints a range of Course Convenors who are responsible for the planning and running of courses. The Technical Director along with the Training Committee and Course Convenor appoint staff to work on each course. Guides who work on these courses are all very experienced and all have been qualified for a minimum of three years.

3 PREREQUISITES

To be considered for membership of the British Association of Mountain Guides, an applicant must meet the requirements listed below:

1. Be at least 22 years of age.
2. Complete the Association's application form.
3. Submit the Association's medical form completed by a medical practitioner.
4. Provide written references from at least two referees, one of whom must be a fully qualified Guide. The Guide must be able to vouch, at least in part, for the authenticity of the candidate's application and be prepared to provide help and advice through the scheme as a mentor. The Technical Director/Training Committee can assign a guide as a referee if the applicant does not know a Guide. One referee must be able to attest to the candidate's good character.
5. Provide details of a current first aid certificate with a mountain component.
6. List any relevant qualifications held e.g. Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor (MCI) - formerly known as Mountaineering Instructor Award (MIA), Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor (WMCI) – formerly known as Mountaineering Instructor Certificate (MIC).
7. Send an Application Fee to British Association of Mountain Guides.
8. Send a copy of your application form to both referees along with a pro forma for the referee to verify your application.

Note – Please only record routes and climbs that you've completed in the last 10 years and any repetition within separate categories will not be accepted.

Rock Climbing Experience

At least 50 multi-pitch climbs E1 5b or above

List all multi-pitch climbs E1 5b or above in a wide variety of areas in the UK, such as the mountainous regions of Scotland, England and Wales. In all cases these routes must have been led or alternate led. Technical leads at E3 5c are recommended, as this ensures that the applicant is consistent at E1 5b.

Winter Climbing Experience

At least 60 snow and ice climbs to include:
50 Grade III or harder (twenty of which must be Grade V or harder) in the UK
10 icefall/cascade climbs grade WI4 or harder in the Alps or similar terrain to be included in the above sixty climbs

List all UK routes climbed, but over forty of these routes should be in the Scottish mountains in a variety of areas e.g. Ben Nevis, Glencoe, Creag Meagaidh, Torridon, Cairngorms. In all cases these routes must have been led or alternate led.

Alpine Mountaineering Experience

Provide details of Alpine mountaineering experience routes of PD or harder, over a minimum period of at least four years. Again routes must be led or alternate led, and not soloed. This experience should show the following:

Knowledge of several Alpine climbing areas, at least three of which should be European.

Twenty ascents of major summits, ten of which must be TD or harder.

A variety of experience including rock, snow/ice and mixed (mentioning any winter ascents).

As a guideline, experience in the European Alps should include a minimum of twenty routes, at least ten of which should be Alpine TD standard or above. Of these ten routes five should be at least 800 metres in length and be mixed routes of a serious and committing nature (i.e. classic North faces or similar).

Greater ranges experience will be considered but the majority of routes and experience must be in the European Alps.

Applicants must include the names of climbing partners on all significant ascents.

Experience outside Europe will be considered, but the great majority of experience should be within Europe.

Ski ascents should be recorded in the relevant section.

Skiing Experience

List a minimum of 30 days ski-touring experience in glaciated Alpine terrain. At least 15 of these days must be on multi-day tours of at least 3 consecutive nights in huts. Also list a minimum of 15 days lift-accessed off-piste skiing in the Alps.

Applicants are expected to ski on-piste, in all conditions, with good style, demonstrating good balance, posture and control.

Applicants should cope well in all off-piste conditions showing the ability to ski safely, effectively and in control.

Ski touring outside Europe will be considered, but the majority of ski touring experience must be in the European Alps.

It is also recommended that applicants obtain as much experience and observation of instructing as possible prior to entering the scheme. They should note that the pre-requirements are high to help ensure that those who embark on the scheme have the commitment, experience and technical ability required to complete the scheme successfully.

4 SUMMARY OF TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT SCHEME

General

The British Mountain Guide Training Scheme is a full-time commitment comprising a series of training and assessment courses developing the skills required by a professional Mountain Guide.

The courses are interspaced with consolidation periods where candidates are expected to gain work experience with other mountaineering/skiing professionals and spend time developing their own personal skills and experience in these fields. General work experience and the directly supervised alpine aspirant logbook days are a valuable part of the BMG Training Scheme. Mountaineering and skiing professionals can offer constructive feedback on a candidate's current performance, hence enabling their continued professional development.

Additional developmental guidance for candidates can be gained either formally through course feedback or informally from their personal mentor.

Candidates should make full use of these allocated consolidation periods. Candidates who fare best on assessments have maximised the use of these periods. The time between training and assessment is limited and careful structuring of this time will often be necessary to gain the level required of a professional Mountain Guide.

Candidates are advised to approach the BMG training scheme as they would a full-time course to ensure that they meet the required standards on each of the critical assessments. Failure to meet the required standards on assessment can delay a candidate's progression through the Training Scheme.

Registration

This takes place when the Association accepts a written application. At this point the candidate becomes known as a BMG registrant. Registrants will be issued with a logbook, and attendance at all courses are recorded in the logbook along with other experience gained as the candidate progresses through the scheme.

The modules below are listed chronologically:

Entrance Exams
These provide an opportunity to discuss the level of training and assessment on future courses and act as a check of the candidate's technical level. The entrance exams are pass or fail. Failure of a candidate to perform at the required level will mean that they cannot continue with the training scheme at that time.

The modules are:

Ski Entrance Exam (January, based in the Alps)
- A formal one-day skiing exam in which candidates demonstrate their current ski standard.

Ski Technique Course (January, based in the Alps)
- A three-day training course focussed on the development of personal performance.

Winter Entrance Exam (February or March, based in Scotland)
- A formal one-day of winter climbing in which candidates demonstrates their ability to climb at grade V.

Winter Foundation (March following on from the Winter Entrance Exam)
- Fundamental Snow and Ice Skills
- Teaching Strategies
- Crag Approach and Descent

Rock Entrance Exam (May, based in North Wales)
- A formal one-day rock climbing assessment in which candidates demonstrate an ability to climb at E1 5b in rock boots and grade V in mountain boots.

Rock Foundation (May, following on from the Rock Entrance Exam)
- Crag rescue scenarios day
- Night Navigation
- Short roping training day.

Any candidate failing one or more of the entrance exams will not be allowed to continue in the BMG training scheme. The Training Committee will decide whether a candidate will be given the opportunity to re-take all the entrance exams again the following year.

All the entrance exams must be completed before attending the British Summer Training 1 course.

On completion of the entrance exams a candidate then becomes a trainee guide and a member of the BMG. At this stage a membership fee is liable.

British Sumer Training – Wales (May)
This consists of a four-day course.

Following the course the candidates should undergo a minimum of two days peer-group training prior to the assessment. These days should be recorded in the logbook.

British Summer Training 2 – North Wales (June)
This consists of a four-day course usually based in North Wales.

These training courses will cover all practical elements of the summer syllabus. These courses will also include physical performance, injury avoidance, environment, leadership, coaching, professionalism, and aspects of assessment techniques.

Summer Consolidation Period - UK
In between training and assessment courses candidates should use this consolidation period to gain a wide variety of summer UK rock-climbing work experience to best prepare themselves for the assessment. It is the candidate's responsibility to organise these work experience placements. Where necessary, advice can be gained from any of the BMG trainers or assessors, other experienced BMG Mountain Guides, or their personal Mentor.

British Summer Assessment – North Wales (September)
Six days of assessment on the summer UK rock syllabus, based in North Wales.

Avalanche Home learning Module

Avalanche Training 1 – Alps (January)
Three days of training to include review of the home learning module, classroom sessions and practical sessions on the mountain.

Avalanche Training - Scotland (January, usually the day before the start of the winter training)
A day of training in avalanche hazard evaluation supported by the Chris Walker Trust and delivered by SAIS.

British Winter Training – Scotland (January)
Five days of training on the winter syllabus, covering client care, guiding techniques and avalanche awareness.

Following the course the candidates should undergo a minimum of two days peer-group training prior to the assessment. These days should be recorded in the logbook.

Winter Consolidation Period – Scotland
In between training and assessment courses candidates should use this consolidation period to gain a wide variety of winter UK work experience to best prepare themselves for the assessment. It is the candidate's responsibility to organise these work experience placements. Where necessary, advice can be gained from any of the BMG trainers or assessors, other experienced BMG Mountain Guides, or their personal Mentor.

British Winter Assessment – Scotland (March)
Six days of assessment on the winter syllabus including personal climbing skills,

guiding skills and client care.

Ski Touring Training - Alps (April)
Five days of training covering ski guiding techniques for touring.

Candidates should undergo a ski tour with peers following on from the training course. This will help to consolidate and develop the skills covered in the course. Advice can be given about appropriate tours by the training team. This tour should be recorded in the logbook.

Alpine Summer Training – Alps (May/June)
Seven days of training on the Alpine syllabus in the European Alps. The Aspirant carnet will be issued on the successful completion of this course.
If candidates are not performing at an appropriate level by the end of the week further training will be advised prior to the issue of an Aspirant carnet

Alpine Apprenticeship First Season – Alps (summer)
The alpine apprenticeship consists of a minimum of 30 quality guided days under the direct supervision of a guide who has been qualified for a minimum of three years.

These days will be carried out under the conditions laid out in the aspirant guidelines. A minimum of 20 of these days must be completed in the first summer with a minimum of 10 in the second summer.

At the end of the first summer a logbook review will take place with the Technical Director and the Alpine Assessment team with mandatory recommendations being made for the second season.

Avalanche Training 2 – Alps (January)
Four days of training to include classroom sessions and practical sessions on the mountain.

Off-Piste Ski & Avalanche Training 3 - Alps (January)
A six-day course starting with three days avalanche education and then integrating this with looking at the skills needed in guiding off-piste skiing.

Icefall/Cascade Training - Alps (February)
Two days training and delivering the skills needed to guide icefalls safely. Candidates should demonstrate safe and consistent performance at WI4.

Alpine Ski Apprenticeship - Alps (winter and spring)
A minimum of 15 days' work experience, post training, with Guides who have been qualified for a minimum of three years. At least ten of these days must be on recognised ski tours and each tour must consist of at least three consecutive nights in huts.

Ski Touring Assessment – Alps (April/May)
Six days on the ski-mountaineering syllabus with assessment of skiing standard and guiding.

Alpine Apprenticeship second season - Alps (summer)
The Aspirant must complete the required days to a minimum of 30 or to the number of days required by the Technical Director after the logbook review.

Alpine Assessment – Alps (August)
Six days of assessment of alpine guiding techniques in the European Alps.

Completion Seminar (venue(s) to be arranged annually)
A half-day seminar to conclude the training and assessment scheme to include:

- Responsibilities of an IFMGA BMG Mountain Guide
- Working as a newly qualified guide
- Accident and complaints procedure
- The BMG Association
- Foreign work registration
- Continued Professional Development
- Social media

To attend Aspirants must have completed all aspects of the training scheme.

Continued Professional Development (CPD)

A completion of two days CPD training every two years is mandatory for all qualified BMG members.

It is the responsibility of each qualified Guide to remain up to date with new techniques and developments.

The BMG will run CPD training on a regular basis. This is done through the different organisational areas.

It is the Guide's responsibility to seek advice and training in areas of work not covered by the BMG syllabus (e.g. Himalayan climbing, industrial rope-access work, canyoning, mountain first aid training courses) should they wish to offer their services in those areas.

5 STAGES OF THE TRAINING SCHEME

Candidates in the scheme are given titles that recognise the level of competence they have achieved and the type of work they are approved to undertake as a BMG member.

BMG Registrant status is gained on successful admission to the BMG Entrance Exams. A logbook is issued so that all guiding activities can be recorded, and courses passed can be signed off until the completion of the scheme. Registrants are not yet members of the BMG or officially on the training scheme.

BMG Trainee status is gained on successful completion of the BMG

Entrance Exams. Trainee Guides join the BMG Association at this point by paying a subscription. Trainees are validated to work in the British mountains and equivalent terrain in summer conditions after they have passed their Summer UK Assessment. Trainees who have passed their BMG Winter Assessment are then eligible to work in the British Mountains and equivalent terrain in winter conditions.

BMG Aspirant status is gained on successful completion of the Alpine Training Course. An Aspirant subscription is due at this point and the candidate is issued with an Aspirant carnet.

The training and assessment scheme provides a series of courses, all of which must be completed successfully to qualify as an IFMGA Mountain Guide. The IFMGA requires that the period of training and assessment should not exceed five years. This starts from the successful completion of the British Summer Assessment. A candidate may apply to the BMG Board for an extension to the five years in the case of exceptional circumstances.

The progress of Trainee and Aspirant members of the BMG who are unsuccessful in completing assessments will be reviewed by the Training Committee after a total of five years in the scheme. They will normally be withdrawn from the scheme after this time.

Candidates who hold the Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor (MCI) or Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor (WMCI) awards can be exempt from certain training requirements. The registrant must apply in writing for exemption from these courses. Refer to Appendix 3.

6 LOGBOOK AND CARNET

Trainee Guide and Aspirant Guide Logbook

Trainee Guides must keep an accurate record of their relevant experience in summer and winter and make it available when requested.

Aspirant Guides must keep a logbook of all Alpine work. The stated number of days required for each section of the syllabus is the minimum and it is expected that they should be quality alpine mountain days. The Aspirant should make note of the following for each of these days:

- dates
- route conditions
- time taken
- number of clients
- client ability levels

The minimum number of logged days required is:

- Alpine mountaineering - 30 logged days
- Alpine ski mountaineering - 15 logged days

All logged days must be completed alongside an IFMGA Guide who has been qualified for a minimum of three years.
Candidates should refer to:
Guidelines for Guides working with Aspirants and *Guidance Notes for Aspirants working with Guides*.

Experience where possible should be gained with a variety of Guides and each one should give constructive feedback, write comments, and sign the candidate's logbook. When the required experience has been gained the logbook should be sent to the Technical Director.

A quality Alpine mountain day is described below, and Aspirants are encouraged to complete as many days of this type as possible. It should be understood however that all guiding experience is invaluable particularly those routes that require a variety of techniques in ascent and descent to complete them. Aspirants should undertake as much work as possible on glaciated terrain, mixed routes, and long rock routes with as many different guides as they can.

Quality Alpine Mountain Day

A quality Alpine mountain day would normally be regarded as a route of PD-AD grade or above and over 500 metres in length. The route should require a variety of techniques in ascent and descent such as short roping, moving together, short pitches and client lowers. Preferably the route would include a glacial approach, but this would clearly not have to be the case on long involved Alpine rock routes such as the Hornli ridge on the Matterhorn, Dent Blanche, Sudgrat on the Salbitchen, Portjengrat, etc

It is strongly recommended that candidates complete at least 10 routes of AD. This will greatly help to develop their guiding skills.

Aspirants should aim to log as many long and varied guiding routes as possible during their two-year aspirant period. However we must not lose sight that the shorter 'trade routes' and more technical pitched routes can also provide exceptionally valuable learning experiences, and aspirants should try to log routes of all grades and all types (rock, ice and mixed) in as many different areas as possible and under the supervision of as many different guides as possible. Up to two école de glace days and two days on via ferratas or valley rock climbing will also be accepted.

IFMGA Carnet

The IFMGA carnet will be awarded on satisfactory completion of the scheme. The Association will also issue a diploma.

7 ASSESSMENT, RE-ASSESSMENT AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

Assessment

At the end of assessment courses the Course Convenor will consider all the views and opinions of the assessors before arriving at a candidate's assessment result. The

Convenor will then inform the candidate of their decision and discuss their performance. There are three possible results:

Pass - This means the candidate has reached the appropriate standard in all areas of the syllabus. The Convenor may also give guidance on how to continue to develop skills. The candidate will then receive a written report and will be able to proceed to the next stage of the scheme.

Defer - The candidate has not reached the required standard in one or more areas of the syllabus. The Convenor will explain why the candidate has been unsuccessful and will give some guidance on remedial action required before re-assessment. The candidate will then receive a written report. Generally candidates will return to re-sit two or more days the following year. In rare cases where the area of weakness can be addressed the same season, then a one-day reassessment may be considered.

Fail - The candidate has not met the required standards and needs to re-take the full assessment course if they are to continue in the scheme. The Convenor will give guidance as to when/whether the candidate should return for re-assessment and what action needs to be taken. The candidate will then receive a written report.

At the end of the assessment courses it is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the assessment result and any subsequent action required is understood e.g. re-assessment, further experience. If unclear, the candidate should ask the Convenor for clarification.

Re-assessment

A candidate who fails or is deferred on the original assessment may be re-assessed. Normally re-assessments will take place during the annual assessment week. Re-assessments may take place at other times in the year, but this is only at the discretion of the Technical Director and Course Convenor, who will ensure that a panel of experienced assessors is available to give a balanced opinion and agree results. A candidate who fails a re-assessment can attend a further re-assessment. Normally a maximum of two re-assessments is permitted at each stage of the scheme. Unsuccessful candidates will be withdrawn from the scheme. In exceptional circumstances candidates can apply to re-sit the assessment or re-start the training scheme.

Appeals and Complaints Procedure

If an assessment candidate feels unfairly treated the options available are:

1. Contact the Convenor of the assessment course and explain the concerns. The Convenor may be able to clarify the decision and resolve the appeal.
2. If still unhappy about the treatment write to the BMG Technical Director explaining fully the concerns. The Technical Director may also be able to offer additional advice and resolve the dispute.
3. If the appeal cannot be resolved by stages 1 and 2, the candidate or the Technical Director may refer the matter to the BMG Board. The decision of the Board will be final.

If a candidate has a complaint concerning any aspect of the Training Scheme:

1. They are first encouraged to discuss the matter with their mentor.
2. If this does not resolve matters the next stage would be to discuss the matter with the Technical Director.
3. If the matter cannot be resolved by stages 1 and 2 then the candidate is directed to contact the Chair PSC (Professional Standards Committee).
4. The Chair PSC may then investigate the complaint further and advise the BMG Board whether substantive grounds for the complaint exist.
5. The BMG Board discusses the complaint and seek to find a resolution. They may dismiss or uphold the complaint or seek further information from the PSC or Training committee to help them make a final decision. The decision of the Board is final.

SYLLABUS

The following syllabus is a guideline and is by no means exhaustive.

1 GENERAL SKILLS AND QUALITIES

During the training and assessment process the candidate is expected to develop and demonstrate a high level in the following:

- Judgement and decision making
- Expert mountaineering knowledge
- Communication skills including client briefing and assessment of ability
- Appropriate route selection and pace
- Route finding, assessment of terrain and hazard awareness
- Professionalism
- Client enjoyment, motivation, satisfaction and education
- Environmental awareness
- Personal organisation skills
- Client care on all grades of climbs and in all mountain situations
- Selection of emergency and first aid equipment
- Bivouac skills with reference to both the guide and the client
- Personal appearance and equipment

2 ALPINE AVALANCHE SYLLABUS

The goal of the BMG Avalanche education syllabus is to enable the candidate to make sound information-based decisions in avalanche terrain on foot and on ski.

At the end of the series of courses the candidates will have the knowledge to demonstrate a professional, best practice approach to avalanche hazard management, group management, risk assessment and rescue.

Alpine Weather

- General influences relating to snowfall

- Local mountain weather
- Mountain weather forecasting

Avalanche Phenomena
- Types of snow failure
- Avalanche motion

The Mountain Snowpack
- Formation of snow in the atmosphere and on the snow surface
- The metamorphosis of snow
- Variation in the snowpack

Snow Stability Evaluation
- Snowpack structure, temperature, humidity and density
- Snow stability categories
- Evaluating snow stability for mountain excursions
- Common errors

Avalanche Hazard Forecasting and Situation Bulletins
- Definitions and international scales for avalanche risk
- Checklist for hazard evaluation and forecasting

Avalanche Terrain
- Avalanche hazard and terrain features
- Slope configuration
- Recognising past avalanche activity
- Considerations for travel terrain

Winter Travel in the Mountains
- Planning at home
- Approach strategy on the route
- Snow conditions
- Terrain
- Human factors

Safety and Self Rescue
- Group management
- Route selection in risk areas
- Equipment
- The avalanche casualty and survival chances
- Rescue action by survivors and first aid priorities
- Formal search and rescue techniques

3 BRITISH SUMMER SYLLABUS

ROCK CLIMBING

Demonstrate care and leadership in the mountain environment to include:

- Personal climbing performance of at least E1 5b
- Guiding at E1 5b in rock boots and at VS in mountain boots with rucksack, doing so competently, safely, inspiring confidence, and demonstrating judgement and client care.

Knots - a good working knowledge of all knots commonly used in mountaineering, to include:

- Tying-on knots
- Belay knots
- Tape knots

Belaying - setting up various anchoring systems to include:

- Single and multiple anchors
- Organisation of stance and changeover
- Belaying methods, modern and traditional
- Understand the use of direct and indirect belays

Rope Handling - various rope systems for climbing and guiding to include:

- Single and double-rope techniques
- Guiding clients in series and in parallel
- Use of protection for leader and second
- Down-climbing.

Abseiling and Lowering - knowledge of safe systems to include:

- Multiple abseils with clients, self-protection whilst abseiling
- Various abseil devices and methods
- Lowering and multiple lowers
- Abseiling and lowering past knots

Improvised Rescue - awareness of and ability to perform a variety of improvised-rescue techniques (using normal climbing equipment) to include:

- Prussiking and ascending a rope
- Escaping from the system
- Evacuation of injured climber
- Hoisting systems
- Assessing crag problems and determining the most efficient and effective solution

INSTRUCTING AND GUIDING

Demonstrate an ability to teach summer rock climbing and associated mountaineering or group-related activities including:

- Teaching climbing to beginners
- Coaching climbing and movement
- Teaching advanced rope work
- Teaching and supervising lead climbing

- Group activities to include bouldering, single pitch climbing, abseiling, group adventure and use of climbing walls

SCRAMBLING

Awareness of and ability to protect clients on various types of scrambling terrain both in ascent and descent including:

- Care and leadership of clients when un-roped
- Short roping - dynamic and fixed rope lengths
- Effective and simple pitched climbing
- The use of direct and indirect belays
- Moving together
- Route finding with and without a guidebook
- Client care in the mountain environment

NAVIGATION

An ability to navigate with speed, pace and efficiency in all summer conditions on mountain terrain including:

- Use of relevant maps, scales and conventional signs
- Knowledge of contours and other methods of showing relief
- Measuring distance on the map and the ground
- Navigating/route finding across country with map alone
- Effective methods of relocation and search techniques.
- Efficient navigation in poor visibility and in darkness
- Route planning
- Use of GPS
- Teaching navigation in a structured format

FORMAL MOUNTAIN RESCUE

Familiarity with Mountain Rescue in United Kingdom including:

- Knowledge of general organisation of search and rescue and casualty care
- Use of equipment for general and crag rescue situations

PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE AND COACHING IN MOUNTAINEERING

- Physical performance
- Avoidance of injury
- Coaching, leadership and assessment skills
- Other mountain training schemes in the UK
- Guiding, professional liability and the law
- The role of technical experts and current legislation
- The mountain environment

4 BRITISH WINTER SYLLABUS

Competence in all summer skills in climbing and mountaineering is assumed.

WINTER CLIMBING

The candidate should demonstrate:

- Good general winter mountaineering skills in the use of axe, crampons and rope for moving over easy, mixed terrain
- Excellent movement skills over moderate mountaineering terrain with an ability to manage others appropriately
- Excellent navigation skills and ability to undertake a mountain expedition in hostile conditions
- An ability to climb competently at Grade V on ice and on buttresses
- Competency and efficiency at all types of Grade V terrain
- An ability to provide two days of appropriate and structured winter climbing for clients using suitable training and guiding skills
- Speed of movement and appropriate rope work skills
- Good choice and construction of sound, appropriate anchors
- Competent route finding
- Sound placement of runners for the safety of both leaders and second
- Understanding and choice of climbing tools and their uses
- Self- and improvised-rescue techniques and rescue procedures

INSTRUCTING AND GUIDING

The candidate should demonstrate an ability to teach winter skills to groups and individuals of any ability on the following subjects:

- Appropriate selection of equipment and clothing for winter
- Awareness of objective dangers and hazards
- Basic winter skills including walking on snow, up and down hill
- Use of the ice axe for walking, climbing and self-arrest
- Climbing skills, rope work and belay techniques for winter climbs
- Use of specialist winter climbing equipment

The candidate should demonstrate suitable guiding skills such as:

- Have an accurate assessment of the anticipated conditions on the mountain
- Be able to select the best and most appropriate objective for the client based on this assessment
- Quick and accurate assessment of client’s abilities
- Awareness of any opportunity to teach appropriate and relevant skills when approaching the mountain or route
- Ensure the comfort of the client, whenever possible, by creating sheltered stances and using appropriate belay systems that can be dismantled efficiently and easily
- Efficient transitions from one rope technique to the next as terrain dictates
- Placing runners for the client's peace of mind as well as safety
- Be inspiring and reassuring company in the mountains
- Have an excellent knowledge of the winter mountain environment and winter climbing history

NAVIGATION

The candidate should be able to navigate efficiently and accurately in hostile winter conditions:

- Applying all the skills of summer navigation to the winter environment
- Being able to use advanced skills to relocate in poor visibility e.g. use of aspect of slope, break of slope etc.
- Navigating quickly and directly when circumstances necessitate

AVALANCHE AND METEOROLOGY

The candidate should have a thorough understanding of UK snow conditions and be able to make correct judgements with respect to avalanche potential and risk evaluation including:

- Knowledge of avalanche classification and the role of the Scottish Avalanche Information Service
- Making accurate snowpack assessments using weather history, snow fall and snowpack history, current weather interpretation, visual observation and snow pit analysis
- Minimising risk in avalanche-prone conditions
- Procedures in the event of avalanche burial, searches etc.

5 ALPINE SUMMER SYLLABUS

ALPINE CLIMBING

Rope-Handling Systems on Mixed Terrain and Rock to include:

- Tying-in systems
- Methods of holding the rope
- Efficiency of movement
- Moving-together systems
- Adaptability of techniques to terrain
- Techniques of descent
- Appropriate choices of rope diameter
- Specific Alpine equipment - plaquettes etc.

Rope-Handling Systems on Glacial Terrain to include:

- Tying-in systems
- Distance between climbers on the rope when journeying
- Roping-up arrangements
- Crevasse rescue

GENERAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Hazard awareness
- Navigation and route finding in the dark, use of altimeters
- Use of guidebooks
- Gaining local knowledge

- Hut etiquette
- Local traditions and languages
- Other mountain users
- Use of radios and mobile phones
- Insurance
- Limitations of work with respect to the IFMGA
- Route finding

ALPINE TEACHING AND GUIDING

- The teaching of snow and ice craft
- Belaying
- Crevasse-rescue techniques
- Knowledge of equipment
- Techniques of descent

VIA FERRATA

- Guidebooks and grades
- Sport via ferrata and Dolomites via ferrata
- Equipment – via ferrata lanyards, slings, helmets, boots, gloves
- Ratios
- Working with young people
- Un-roped and roped parties
- Ropes and tying-on systems
- Moving together, belaying techniques on steep sections
- Potential problems, rescue scenarios
- Weather

6 SKI MOUNTAINEERING SYLLABUS

ALPINE SKIING

- Piste downhill skiing - the ability to ski linked parallel turns of varying radius with good basic balance and control
- Off-piste skiing - the ability to ski in a variety of snow conditions safely, efficiently and in control

Downhill Skiing Skills - demonstrate good technique in the following areas:

- Deep snow
- Crusty snow
- Firm/icy snow
- Steep ground, side slipping, jump turns
- Bad visibility
- Braking with ski sticks

Uphill Skiing Skills - demonstrate and convey sound advice regarding:

- Use of equipment – skis, bindings, ski crampons, skins

- Skinning technique
- Star turns, kick turns, use of axe to improve track and turning platform
- Setting a good skinning track - route choice geared to client ability, equipment, terrain and snow conditions
- Carrying skis on rucksack

Roped Skiing

- Rope choice, roping up, tying on, distance apart
- Roped skiing uphill/downhill, changing direction and rope control
- Holding a fall
- Escaping from the system
- Ski belays
- Hoisting and crevasse rescue

Route Planning and Navigation

- Route planning on the map/on the ground
- Use of altimeter
- Skiing on a bearing – uphill, flat and downhill
- Judgement of distance - stride pattern and ski length
- Use of GPS

Rescue and Evacuation

- Crevasse rescue - problems associated with an un-roped skier in crevasse
- Avalanche transceivers - different types and limitations (multiple burials) client/guide transceiver checks and client training.
- Conducting a search
- First aid and cold injury
- Improvised sledge - stretcher kit/bivi bag
- Evacuation of victim on improvised stretcher on a variety of terrain
- Understanding organisation of larger rescue, callout and search methods

Avalanche

Avalanche work on this course will be of a practical nature and related to conditions found in the week, avalanche terrain and route choice

Tour Preparation

- Planning, preparation and risk assessment
- Hut use
- Training and briefing clients
- Equipment

Off-Piste Guiding

- Group management, control and briefing
- Guiding snowboarders
- Client care and security on difficult terrain
- Rucksack contents - guide/clients/group, off-piste/touring
- Searching for lost skis
- Route choice - client ability, terrain traps, snow conditions

- Descent of avalanche-prone areas, precautions and protection
- Use of radios and phones
- Use of ropes for abseil/lower/static line
- Glacier skiing

7 ICEFALL / CASCADE TRAINING SYLLABUS

Competence in all summer and winter skills in climbing and mountaineering is assumed. Candidates should demonstrate safe and consistent performance at WI4.

- Planning and resources for a cascade guiding day
- Assessing the stability/safety of ice structures and routes
- Client and stance management, choice of line and managing two clients
- Direct belaying methods
- Descent using Abalakov/V threads
- Cleaning icicle fringes and daggers in descent.
- Personal climbing technique and teaching progressions for clients
- Teaching lead climbing
- Larger group session management
- Risk-management strategies including other climbers

GUIDANCE NOTES

APPENDIX 1 Sample Programmes

Training and assessment courses are predominantly practical and are based on the syllabus requirements. On all training and assessment courses sample programmes are given as a guide. Convenors make decisions about the courses based on the prevailing conditions and may adjust the format and content accordingly. The individual days may be moved and/or changed to suit area, conditions and needs of the course and candidates.

1 Entrance Exams

The entrance exams are formal courses open to candidates whose applications have been accepted by the BMG Training Committee.

1.1 Ski Entrance Exam

This course normally runs in the Alps during January. The BMG Ski Technique course will run at about this time, and candidates are required to attend this course as well.

Piste Performance:

- Ski all groomed runs in control of speed and line.
- Ski round grippy turns, using angulation and body separation to achieve edge grip

- Show good body management, separation between legs & upper body, using quiet arm carriage

Off-piste Performance:

- Ski in control of speed and line in all conditions up to black piste angles (30-35°)
- Ski appropriately to the situation
- Applicants should demonstrate elements of all the above piste criteria; use legs to steer and avoid excessive upper body movements to initiate turns
- Demonstrate neat and appropriate technique for the situation.

1.2 Ski Technique Course

A three-day course based in a ski area in the Alps, teaching candidates personal skiing skills on and off-piste.

1.3 Winter Entrance Exam & Winter Foundation course

This course normally runs in Scotland during February or March.

Day 1 Winter climbing

Candidates demonstrate general winter mountaineering skills and climb an appropriate route of grade V.

Day 2 Winter skills

General mountaineering and navigation
Route selection and approaches
Hazard avoidance and client care

Day 3 Instructional Skills

Teaching of winter skills, navigation and avalanche awareness

1.4 Rock Entrance Exam and Rock Foundation Course

This course normally runs in England or Wales during April.

Day 1 Rock climbing assessment at E1 5b

Demonstrate competence in rope work and leading on multi-pitch routes at a grade of E1 5b in rock boots and grade V in mountain boots. Candidates coming forward to this rock-climbing assessment are expected to be safe in terms of their rope work and other related areas of competence.

Day 2 Short Roping

Dynamic short roping in the summer UK environment
Evening: Night Navigation

Day 3 Improvised rescue

Basic overview of multi-pitch rock-climbing guiding and improvised rescue.
Evening: Debrief

Candidates need to be aware of and prepared for the fact that the entrance exams may be run in less-than-ideal conditions. Candidates who are clearly deficient in any area will not be allowed to proceed with the BMG Training Scheme and will be

informed of this decision during the induction courses review.

2 British Summer Training Course

2.1 British Summer Training Rock 1

This course normally runs in the Lake District during late April/early May.

Day 1 Guided rock climbing

Establishing aims and delivering a structured day.
Rope methods for differing guide to client ratios.
Stance management
Use of descents, multiple abseils/lowers and client care.
Review of the day

Day 2 Short roping

Short-roping techniques in practice with one/two clients on serious mountain scrambling terrain, in ascent and descent.
Techniques covered include simple pitched climbing, short pitches and moving together.
Aspects such as anchor selection and use, various belay methods, risk assessment will be covered.
Review of the day

Day 3 Teaching climbing

On multi-pitch routes focusing on teaching principles, techniques, and delivery of a structured day.
Aspects such as teaching methods, learning styles, use of different rope systems, progression and teaching leading will be covered.
Review of the day

Day 4 Consolidation

An opportunity to further practise and consolidate key skills and techniques with a day on mountain rock climbs and scrambles. Route finding, navigation, the use of different rope systems and client care will be covered. Review of the day

Course debrief and individual **action plan** will follow this day to complete the training course.

2.2 British Summer Training Rock 2

This course normally runs in North Wales during late May early June.

Day 1 Introducing the Coaching Process

Climbing wall and classroom sessions to explore the process of adapting techniques to optimise learning.
Review candidates short-roping development to explore how best to learn, coach and develop complex skills.
Psychology of Client Care (lecture/session)

Day 2 Structured Progress and Client Development

Building progression and decision training into our coaching
Structure of practice for optimal learning
Coaching climbing movement
Occupational Health, LTAD and injury prevention. The risks of a long term involvement in adventure sports.

Day 3 PSC and Navigation
Professional Standards in Guiding, insurance obligations and reporting.
The theory of coaching strategic mountaineering skills, followed by a practical day outdoors looking at teaching and assessing navigation. The day will consider various judgment skills that need to be trained and assessed as a technical advisor or for working on the schemes and awards of Mountain Training.
Structure of Mountain Training in the UK and overseas

Day 4 Assessment Experience
A day of putting it all together with real mock clients under an experienced BMG mentor. This day will run at a 1:2 ratio and can be tailored to best suit the action plan for each candidate.
Course review and action plans prior to assessment.

3 British Summer Assessment
This course normally runs in North Wales in September.

Introductory evening: Informal meeting with Course Convenor and available assessors.

Day 1 Personal climbing performance
Leading confidently on multi-pitch routes at E1 5b, on major mountain crags or sea cliffs. Emphasis will be placed on personal performance, efficiency, rope management, stance organisation, route finding and the safety and well-being of fellow party members. Two candidates will climb for the day with one assessor.

Evening: Theory paper based on technical knowledge and general knowledge of British and world climbing (approximately 1hour, 30 minutes).

Debrief of theory paper and a chance to ask the Course convenor any questions associated with the assessment**.**

Day 2 Improvised crag rescue
Solving problems encountered on multi-pitch climbs, including dealing with accidents, emergencies and situations which will include lowers, hoists, accompanied abseils etc. Candidates will also be expected to solve common problems created by clients. One assessor will assess two candidates climbing on E1 terrain.

Days 3,4 Overnight and mountain expedition
This is an intensive two-day expedition which is based around long mountain climbing and scrambling routes involving pitched climbing, short roping, night navigation, a bivouac and client care. Emphasis is placed on the candidate's mountaineering

judgement and consideration for the safety and comfort of the assessor acting as a client. One assessor will assess two candidates.

Day 5 Client day
Guiding one adult client for a day's rock climbing on multi-pitch crags. Candidates will meet their clients and will be expected to question them about their experience and aspirations and then plan a suitable day for their clients. Emphasis will be placed on client care and motivation. Equipment for clients will be available if necessary. One assessor will assess each candidate. The assessor may join the roped party as appropriate.

Evening: Lecture by experienced guide on ethics, professionalism and economic consideration of the guiding profession.

Day 6 Teaching day
Candidates will each have a novice climber for the day and will be expected to teach the skills and techniques of rock climbing and associated activities. The candidate will be expected to plan a suitable itinerary with the emphasis on the teaching of rock climbing and showing a logical progression through the day. One assessor will assess one candidate.

Results and debrief
Candidates will be formally debriefed and the results delivered individually by the Course Convenor.

4 Avalanche Home Learning Module

Candidates should have a clear understanding of the following prior to attending any BMG avalanche courses.

A prior learning pack will be supplied to candidates on completion of their summer assessment; this will be reading, online resources and case studies. This uses the White risk paid for platform and the NY Times Tunnel Creek and Avalanche Canada Cherry Bowl case studies. There is a worksheet to go with these case studies.

At the end of the home learning the candidates should have attained the following learning outcomes:

1. Identify and understand the basic mechanics of the main avalanche types - Glide, Slab, Wet Snow, Loose Snow and powder.
2. Show awareness of the 5 avalanche danger ratings and how they may manifest themselves in the landscape.
3. Interpret an avalanche forecast.
4. Understand the importance of slope angle and how to read slope angle from the map and in terrain.
5. Be aware of the Graphical Reduction method and how it may help terrain selection.
6. Demonstrate the ability to plan a simple day in the mountains identifying key places and areas of concern.

7. Be aware and have practiced 1:1 companion rescue.
8. Understand and be able to apply the key elements of the Be Avalanche Aware process.

5 Avalanche 1 Training

Evening 1

Outline of the course, review of the home learning module and case studies. Introduction to the stability sheet/field book and how it will be used each morning so the students can prepare for this before the morning meeting.

- How do we make decisions?
- Decision-making case study.
- Avalanche problems – what are the key problems, what is our problem on any given day.
- Primary and secondary avalanche problems for any given day.
- Avalanche problem mitigation. Size, where, when how do we manage it.
- Avalanche initiation and propagation - Strength, Structure and Shear.
- Understanding structure, looking for structural areas of concern - five structural levels (top 1m of pack, faceted crystal form, layer <10cm, 2 steps hardness difference, grain size difference of 1mm between layers).
- Measuring strength (stability tests- CT) and propensity to propagation (ECT).
- The relationship between strength, structure and propagation propensity.

Day 1 Snowpack, terrain and an introduction to human factors.

Morning meeting begins by going through the stability analysis sheet. This helps give a structured approach to developing a solid decision-making framework helping the group to choose appropriate terrain moving forward through their guiding careers. This will be led by an instructor in the first morning then by a trainee after that.

- Avalanche and weather forecasts for the day.
- Morning stability sheet.
- Stability tests.
- Terrain – simple, challenging and complex
- Terrain traps, consequence and anchors
- Terrain case study.

On Mountain

- Road head (start of week) and daily transceiver checks. (We should ensure consistency across all courses where transceivers are used. This way we can check on Alpine courses that the candidates have absorbed and understood the procedure and why we use it).
- Gensweins 15-minute protocol to ensure basic rescue skills.
- Observations of weather and snow in relation to the avalanche forecast.
- Observations of weather and snowpack.
- Snowpack structure, identify layers, different aspects, altitudes.
- Snowpack tests CT, ECT appropriate, relevant information gathering.

Day 2

- Avalanche and weather forecasts for the day
- What observations are we looking for to confirm or deny the forecast.
- Heuristics. FACETS
- How to mitigate human factors by using margins – checklists, groups, situational awareness, route planning, communication, weather, travel protocols, skills of those we are with and terrain selection.
- Communication – inquiry, advocacy, observations, clarification.
- Risk and hazard, probability vs consequence. A guide's need to balance the desire to deliver for the clients vs managing the hazard and risk exposure.
- Avalanche planning tools
- Weather - precipitation, wind and temperatures, how they affect the snowpack.

On the mountain

- Observations, how do they relate to the avalanche forecast.
- Terrain selection and identification.
- Snowpack analysis and tests - digging informal snow profiles, hunting for structural issues. Emphasis on the need for speed during these procedures.
- Critique use of EC/ CT with view of safety of site, representative site re elevation/aspect of intended ascent, and descent/weather conditions (wind and solar effect).
- Incorporating propagation propensity into decision making using Strength Structure and Shear.

Day 3 Rescue

Classroom

- Avalanche and weather forecasts for the day.
- Introduction to the Strategic Mindset (pre reading for candidates). Assessment, Stepping Out, Status Quo, Entrenchment, Open Season.
- Metamorphism and persistent weak layers case study
- Rescue case study to introduce the topic.
- Transceiver theory – how a transceiver works.
- Electronic interference.
- Rescue protocols – safety, group management, transceiver search phases, probing, strategic shovelling, first aid I- KAR Protocol),
- Call for help – when?
- Discussion on transceiver use in the Scottish vs Alpine environment.

On Mountain

- Observations of weather and snow in relation to the avalanche forecast.
- Transceiver search one to one then multiple burials tactics, different transceivers, three circles, micro strip etc.
- Tactics for finding those buried without transceivers.
- Advanced multiple burial rescue scenarios. These will become more complicated with multiple burials, victim's running interference, injured parties, highlight how difficult it is to recover bodies without a shovel and probe.

6 British Winter Training
This course normally runs during the third week of January in Scotland.

Day 1 Personal climbing and general guiding skills
Stance management, retreats, rescues. Short roping skills
Evening: Navigation theory

Day 2
Techniques for guiding easy routes, client care, short-roping skills.
Evening: Navigation skills and training into darkness

Day 3
Techniques for guiding harder routes, various rope techniques e.g. climbing in series, parallel, client care, short roping skills.
Evening: Guides equipment/discussion of BMG Winter Assessment

Day 4
A mountaineering day developing short roping and short pitching techniques, moving together and navigation.
Evening: Navigation skills and training into darkness

Day 5
A day of consolidation bringing together all the learnt skills of general mountaineering, guided climbing, navigation and instruction.
Evening: Debrief and action plans moving forward

7 British Winter Assessment
This course normally runs during the first week in March in Scotland.

Evening before course starts
Formal meeting with Course Convenor and available assessors.

Days 1,2 General mountaineering skills and expedition
Movement on steep ground, snow craft, ice craft, navigation, route finding, avalanche assessment, emergency shelters over two days with a night spent on the hill.

Day 3 Personal climbing performance
Candidates climbing in pairs with one assessor leading on Grade V routes on mixed / buttress climbs.

Day 4 Personal climbing performance
A snow and ice route in Cairngorms/Ben Nevis/Creag Meagaidh. Candidates climbing in pairs with one assessor leading on Grade V routes.

Day 5 Guiding day
Candidates prepare one client in snow and ice craft, belaying, rope work etc. as

appropriate. The day should include the completion of a winter route. One assessor will assess each candidate.

Day 6 Guiding day, debriefing and results
Guiding same client on a longer route (typically Carn Etchachan, Creagh Meaghaidh, Ben Nevis). This will be at a standard appropriate to the clients' ability.

8 Ski Touring Training

This course normally runs late March or early April in the European Alps. Part of this course will take place in a ski area and the rest of the course will take the form of ski tours in the mountains.

Days 1, 2
Off-piste and downhill skills including party management, route selection, terrain and evaluation of conditions. Emergency procedures and the use of transceivers.

Days 3,4,5
Ski tours in the mountains covering all aspects of ski mountaineering including route choice, uphill skills, touring equipment, glacier skiing, the use of ropes, emergency procedures and evacuation in remote areas.

9 Summer Alpine Training

This seven-day course runs in June in the European Alps over a period of 8 days with a floating rest day.

Day 1
Roping up techniques and systems.
The trainer will 'guide' the Aspirants for a major part of the day so as to demonstrate the standard.

Day 2
Ascent of a technical rock peak with a complicated descent using a variety of techniques.

Day 3
Ascent of a mixed peak, using guiding techniques on snow and ice.

Day 4
Glacier day: ice craft, crevasse rescue systems and glacier crossing systems.

Day 5
Ascent of a more difficult rock peak, Grade IV/V, with use of more advanced moving-together techniques where appropriate.

Day 6
Via ferrata training

Day 7
Consolidation of guiding techniques
Debrief and departure.

During the evenings, general topics as outlined in the Alpine Syllabus will be covered.

This course is usually run from a series of high Alpine huts. The programme is flexible to allow for weather, conditions and varying venues.

10 Avalanche 2 Training

This course normally runs in January

Evening 1

- Case Study
- Snowpack history for the season.

Day 1
Classroom

- Case study review Sorbmegaisa (this was given to the students prior to the course)
- Revision of Strength Structure, Shear and stability tests.
- Introduction to formal recording and SWAG. Full profile, test profile and how to record.
- Review of Strategic Mindset (pre reading for candidates). Assessment, Stepping Out, Status Quo, Entrenchment, Open Season.
- Human factors review and discussion on using margins to combat these factors – Situational awareness tools
- Weather and avalanche forecasts.
- Conceptual model of avalanche risk – likelihood of triggering/spatial distribution, likelihood of triggering and confidence. This should have appropriate sections on the AM meeting form, but these advanced concepts can be omitted during the Scottish course.

On the Mountain

- Weather observations and relating to avalanche forecast.
- Selection of profile site.
- Snow profile demonstrated by instructor.
- Snow profile carried out by candidate coached by instructor.

Classroom

- PM meeting.
- Plot snow profile.
- Snow profile interpretation and how they are of use to us as guides.

Day 2
Classroom

- Weather and avalanche forecasts.

- Hazard and risk analysis form AM – setting the scene for what should be observed on the hill.
- Managing uncertainty. Conceptual model of avalanche hazard, Strategic mindset, Banded vigilance model, Thinking in bets. Case study

On the Mountain

- Snow profile consolidation, group will complete snow profile in teams focusing on accurate, neat and efficient recording.
- Ski tour or off-piste skiing looking at terrain, formal and informal snow pack tests.

Classroom

- Plot snow profile
- Hazard and risk analysis form PM
- Avalanche considerations for ice climbers
- Revision of rescue management looking at tools and tactics for managing a large-scale incident including dealing with all those involved including the public, managing multiple languages, liaising with rescue authorities. Case studies
- Equipment for a rescue stretcher
- Tour planning for the next day.

Day 3

Classroom

- Weather and avalanche forecasts.
- Hazard and Risk analysis form AM.
- Tour planning for the day.
- Expert intuition and the avalanche problem Low probability high consequence.
- How do we combat the human factor – Margins, situational awareness.
- Repeat exposure.
- Grimentz case study

On the mountain

- Ski tour looking at terrain and group management.
- Formal and informal stability tests.
- Rescue exam 2 units in $30m^2$, less than 10m units in a sack 1m down.
- Group rescue scenario including stretcher build and evacuation to the road.
- Examined Rescue scenario –-Managing a complex multiple burial scenario:
    1. Information gathering,
    2. Injured parties,
    3. Tactics for finding those buried without transceivers.
    4. Looking for the candidate to control the area and deploy appropriate available resources.
    5. Requesting assistance
    6. Overcoming language difficulties
    7. Liaising effectively with attending professional rescue organisations.
    8. Evacuation plan.

9 No time limits. Pass/ fail on an agreed criterion.
10 Candidates should be able to evacuate a causality using the equipment to hand.

- Debrief of scenario.

Classroom

- Hazard and Risk analysis form PM
- Tour planning for the next day.

Day 4

Classroom

- Weather and avalanche forecast.
- Hazard and Risk analysis form AM.
- Tour planning for the day moving into more challenging terrain.

On the mountain

- Ski tour looking at terrain and group management.
- Formal and informal stability tests.

Classroom

- Course debrief and individual feedback.
- Examine each candidate's field book as a quality check of recorded observation standards and recorded profiles.

Between Avalanche 2 and Avalanche 3 each candidate will complete 10 snow profiles; these profiles should demonstrate:

- Good choice of location, - safe, appropriate, looking for targeted information.
- Clear record keeping.
- Well plotted profile with annotations of layers of concern and notes on structure and stability.

11 Off-Piste Ski and Avalanche 3 Training Course

This course normally runs in January

This course combines downhill ski-guiding skills with development of the aspirant's avalanche hazard awareness and risk management strategies.

Prior to the course the candidates will record the snowpack history for the season to be presented to the group during the first session. The group will be given different areas around the Alps to develop the knowledge base of the group and to understand the process of remote data collection.

The candidates will also prepare a run list detailing the classic off-piste descents in the area where the course will take place. This will include descents accessible directly from lifts but also with short skins or hikes.

The candidates will run the morning meeting from Day 2 onwards.

Day 1

Classroom

- Course overview and welcome.
- Snowpack history presented by candidates.
- Risk mitigation strategies discussed these should include
    1. Traffic light run list system explained to candidates that this is the system that comes from a mechanised guiding operation.
    2. Risk reduction models – Munter, Avaluator, BAA, Varsom check list, Duclos Vigilance model.
- Ensure candidates have a strong tool set to help organise information.
- Cultural differences between working in a group – centre or heli/cat ski operation as opposed to operating individually.
- Stability assessment discussed and run list considered for the day.
- Discussion on strategic mind-set.
- Fast thinking/slow thinking mindset – see reading list.
- Incorporate strategic mindset into a terrain progression/snowpack confidence model moving into complex terrain utilising the run list.
- Risk perception profile. – Recap conceptual model of avalanche risk
- Human biases
- Ski conditions for the day, recent snowpack history, weather effects on snowpack in last week, 48 hrs, 24hrs, 12hrs. How does this fit with the hazard forecast and the candidate's hazard evaluation? Where will we find the best skiing, terrain, altitude and aspect.

On the Mountain

- Observations of snowpack and stability.
- Compare snowpack history as discussed in classroom with observations.
- Instructor models best practice off-piste guiding techniques.
- Evening stability analysis discussion and planning for next day.

Day 2

Morning meeting

- Avalanche and weather forecasts in addition access Class 2 data from remote weather stations.
- Stability analysis and run list
- Strategic mind-set for the day.
- Alain Duclos vigilance model as a tool for ski guiding versus carefully tracked snowpack while guiding in one location.
- Discussion on information gathering –what information do we want to find today. – focusing on addressing key information deficits.

On the hill

- Observations of snow and weather.
- Stability tests, informal and formal CT and ECT.
- Candidates start to lead off-piste, discussions on style, pitch lengths etc.
- Evening stability analysis discussion and planning for next day.

Day 3
Morning meeting

- Stability analysis and run list
- Strategic mind-set for the day.
- Off-piste guiding on a glacier.
- Equipment for glacier skiing.
- How to guide the Vallee Blanche or other high-altitude glacial descent – managing inexperienced people in a high-risk environment.

On the hill

- Off Piste guiding in glaciated terrain.
- Candidates lead with discussions in the group about tactics appropriateness etc.
- Evening stability analysis discussion and planning for next day.

Day 4
Morning meeting

- Stability analysis and run list
- Strategic mind-set for the day.
- Guiding on steeper terrain- choosing terrain, group management.

On the hill

- Conditions appropriate for steeper skiing.
- Judging group ability
- Group management and risk assessment.
- Anchors and belays for skiing on steeper terrain.
- Spotting
- Short roping on skis
- Managing an abseil on skis

Day 5
Morning meeting

- Stability analysis and plan for the day.
- Strategic mindset for the day.
- Candidates plan and execute the day using information gathering, run list and mindset. Questioning what they expect to find.

On the hill

- Candidates take turns guiding on classic descents, discussions on group management, risk assessment and observed stability. Formal and informal stability tests will be conducted through the day to confirm or question the forecast and the candidate's stability analysis.
- Formal timed snow pit including 3x formal tests. One hour – not including snow excavation. On completion 1:1 with instructor in the pit defending the accuracy of their recorded profile versus actual snowpack, and confirmation of grain identification.

Candidates should demonstrate:

- Appropriate site of pit, - safe, appropriate, targeted.
- The candidates should demonstrate a clean working environment.
- The candidate should demonstrate a clean well organised pit with a methodical working practice.
- The candidate should demonstrate good clean record keeping.

Day 6
Examine each candidate's field book as a quality check of recorded observations and their recorded profiles.

Snow profile exam. This is pass/fail by defined criteria. Each candidate to complete a snow profile in less than one hour. This should be to the international standard. (appendix to follow).
Consolidation and development in consultation with the candidates.

Debrief and action plans for the candidates. Discussion on preparation for the Ski Touring Assessment.

12 Icefall/Cascade Training Course

This course normally runs in the European Alps in January or February. Candidates should demonstrate safe and consistent performance at WI4.

In addition candidates should log a minimum of two routes (WI4 or above) the same season prior to attending the course.

Day 0
Course introduction and group planning session for following day. Avalanche assessment and avoidance is a thread throughout the course.

Day 1
Ascent of a multi-pitch ice fall/s and abseil descent. Afternoon top-roping session: teaching movement progression and personal performance coaching.
Evening: reviewing case studies.

Day 2
Ascent of a multi-pitch ice fall with focus on dynamic risk assessment, ice structures and analysis, and further consolidation of guiding skills.
Discussion of teaching lead climbing, other European Ice climbing venues.
Final debrief.

12 Ski Touring Assessment

This course normally runs during the spring in the European Alps. This course is based in an Alpine area and will include up to four nights in an Alpine hut.

Day 1 Downhill skills – ski level appraisal
Transceiver skills
On-piste and off-piste personal skills

Leading groups off piste
On-piste and off-piste client care and leadership skills

Days 2-6 Ski touring skills
Local tours and a hut trip assessing group management and client care.
Route planning, route choice and hazard awareness.
Uphill skills
Use of huts and remote emergency care/evacuation
Personal skiing standard will be assessed on a continual basis over the week**.**

14 Summer Alpine Assessment

This course normally runs during the middle of August in the European Alps in the Aspirants' second alpine season

Day 1
Course introduction. Glacier day covering ice craft, crevasse rescue and roping systems for glacial travel.

Day 2
Ascent of a mixed route using a variety of guiding techniques on both snow and rock.

Day 3
Ascent of a rock route using a variety of guiding techniques with an emphasis on speed and efficient rope work and systems in ascent and descent.

Day 4
Ascent of a longer, more difficult rock route, assessing personal skills: speed, efficiency, route finding etc.

Day 5
Ascent of a longer, more difficult, mixed route, assessing personal skills.

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Day 6
Climbing multi-pitch rock up to French 5c/6a in mountaineering boots demonstrating good climbing style and appropriate guiding techniques in ascent and descent.

The individual days may be interchanged and/or changed slightly to suit area, conditions and needs of assessment. Throughout the week navigation and route finding will be assessed

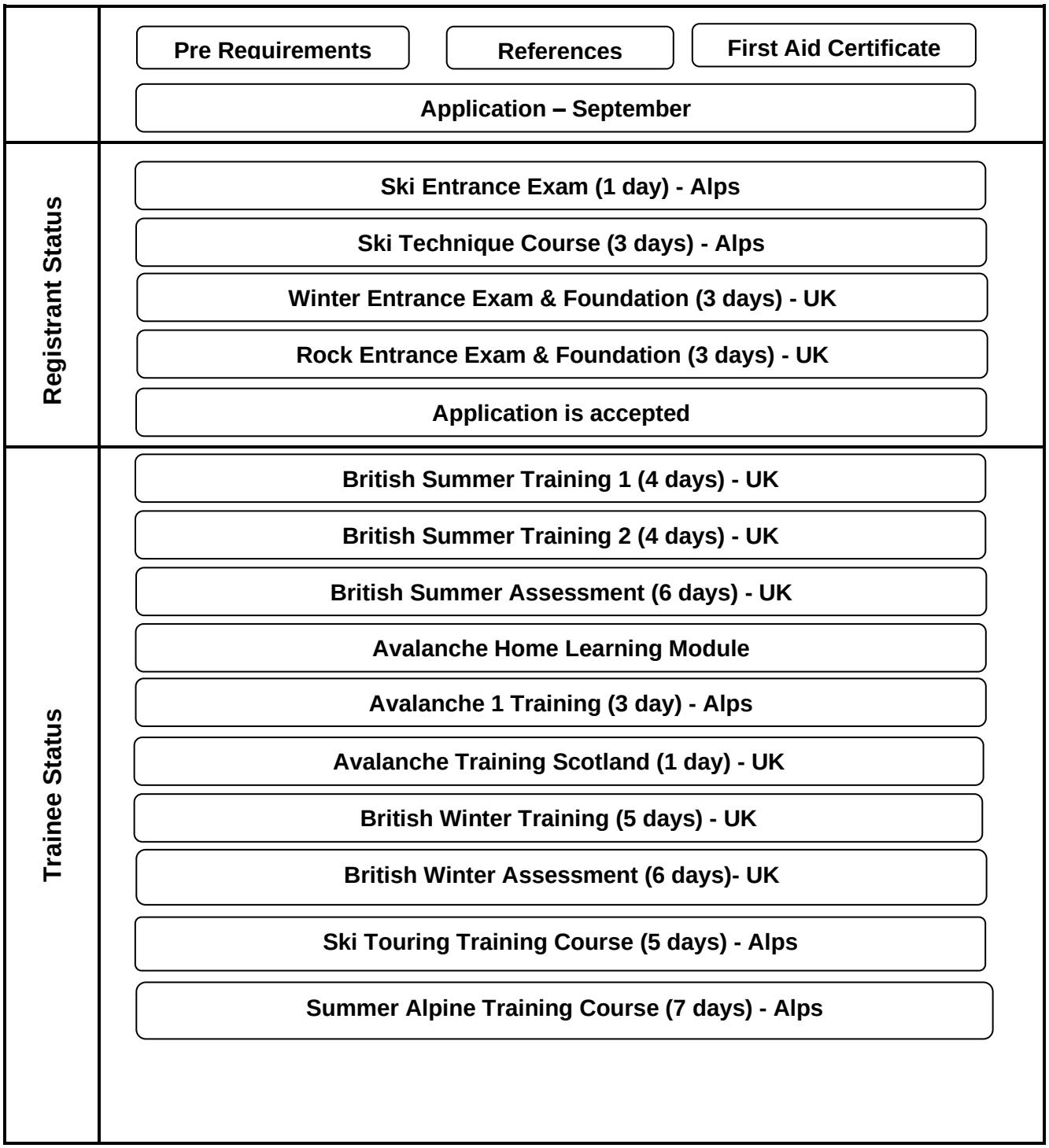
15 Completion Seminar

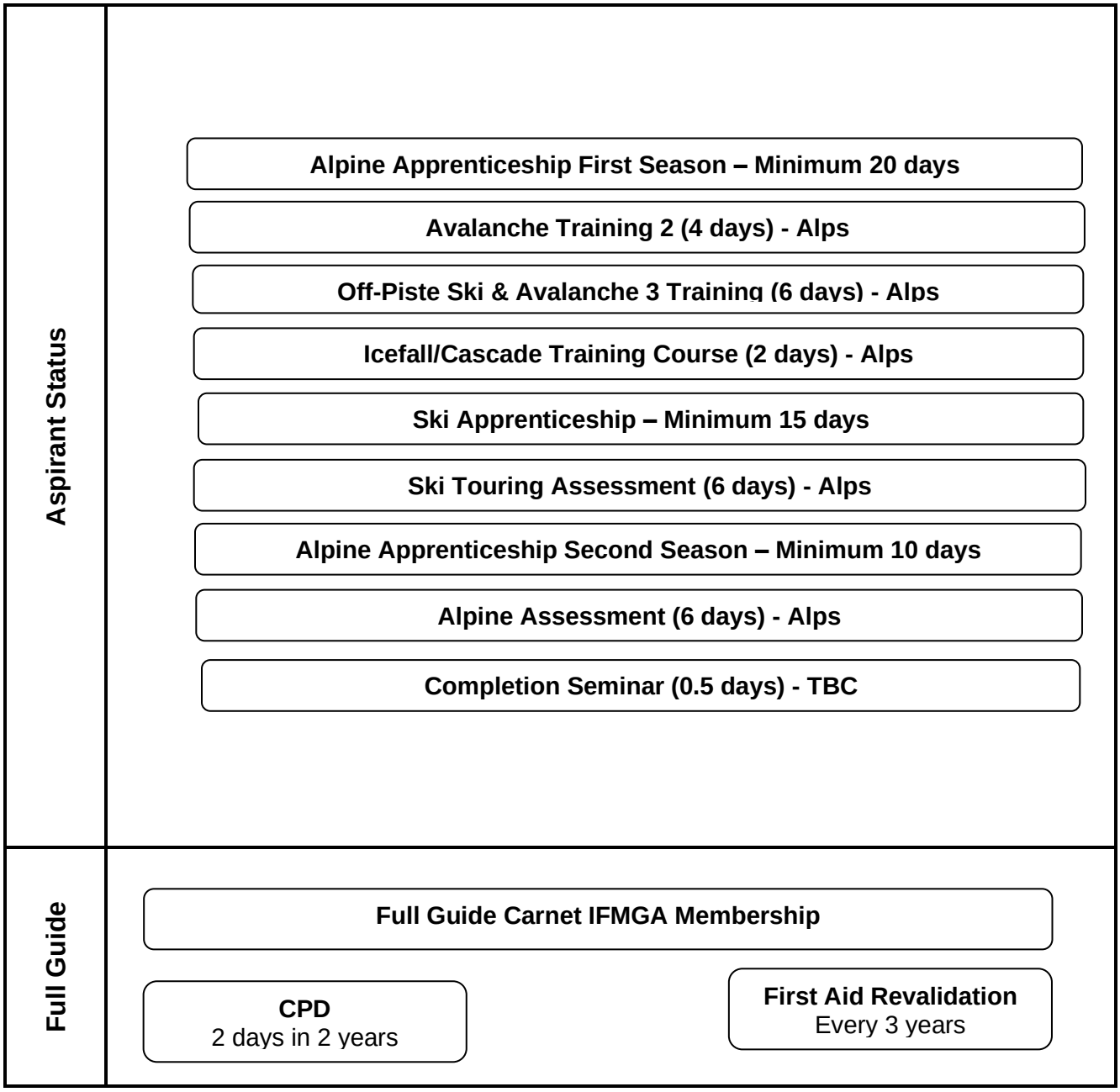
A half-day run at different times of the year and at venues to suit both the Technical Director and the Aspirant(s). Aspirant(s) will present their logbooks showing they have completed all the required components of the training and assessment scheme. The seminar will review the Aspirants' experiences through the scheme and give direction and guidance for their future careers as a Guide. Topics will include:

- Responsibilities of an IFMGA BMG Mountain Guide

- Working as a newly qualified guide
- Accident and complaints procedure
- The BMG Association
- Foreign registration to work
- Continued Professional Development
- Social media

APPENDIX 2: British Mountain Guides Training and Assessment Scheme





APPENDIX 3: Format of BMG Training for Mountaineering and Climbing instructors in British Summer and Winter Conditions

- Submit application to the BMG and meet entry pre-requirements
- Attend the Ski Entrance Exam
- Attend the Ski Technique Course
- Attend the Winter Entrance Exam
- Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructors (WMCIs) can be exempted from the two-day Winter Foundation Course after the Winter Entrance Exam. However it is strongly recommended that they attend this course.
- Attend the Rock Entrance Exam

- Mountaineering and Climbing Instructors (MCIs) and Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructors (WMCIs) can be exempt from the two-day Rock Foundation Course after the Rock Entrance Exam. However it is strongly recommended that they attend this course.

MCIs and WMCIs will then complete all the remaining aspects of the BMG training and assessment scheme.

APPENDIX 4 First Aid

First Aid Certificate
All candidates must hold a valid, standard first aid certificate. There must be an additional mountain component. This should include casualty handling/lifting/carrying, altitude sickness, frostbite, hypothermia, sunburn and snow blindness. It is the responsibility of all Guides to keep first aid certificates up to date and to obtain more advanced training for remote expeditions e.g. high-altitude medicine.

APPENDIX 5 Continued Professional Development (CPD)

Qualified Mountain Guides are required to undertake a minimum of two days of CPD training every two years. The following training course in the Guides' scheme is available and open to Full Guides:

- Ski Technique Course

Short courses are also offered periodically on a range of subjects, which include the following:

- High altitude medicine
- Expedition and Trekking
- Canyoning
- Risk Management and non-technical skills
- Any other subject documented in this manual.

APPENDIX 6 Training with other IFMGA Guide Schemes

The IFMGA encourages the sharing of learning between all the different training schemes. The BMG plays an active role both hosting other nations' trainers and taking part in their various schemes. The BMG currently work with ENSA to ensure our Aspirants have equivalence in France and jointly staff a 5 day training course for Aspirants (normally to run after the BMG Summer Alpine Training).

Sept 2022
TB