

Course Notes



Countryside Leader Award

March 2012

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Cover photograph: Alice Turner

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General Notes

Introduction

The Countryside Leader Award (CLA) is designed for those who wish to lead walks and camping expeditions in non-remote, lowland countryside. This corresponds with the recommended DofE bronze and silver expedition terrain. See 'Scope' (page 4).

The award is designed for people who already have considerable experience working with young people.

For more see: www.countrysideleaderaward.org

Recognition

Before registering on the scheme please check that the CLA is recognised by the body responsible for authorising your activities (e.g. your employer or your DofE Operating Authority).

The CLA includes practical assessment of technical competence, and assessment of leadership skills through scenarios and discussion. The competence and suitability of a CLA holder to work in any given role are a matter of judgement for both the employer and the award holder themselves.

There is increasing recognition of this qualification. A full list of organisations and authorities that recognise the Countryside Leader Award is here:

www.countrysideleaderaward.org/recognition/

Prerequisites

Register with the CLA at:

www.countrysideleaderaward.org/register/

The minimum age for registration is 18.

To attend a training course you must either:

- Be a Qualified Teacher **or**
- Be a Qualified Youth Worker **or**
- Have at least 10 days' and 5 nights' experience of leading, or assisting with the leadership of, walking and camping groups

You must also have prior personal experience of:

- Camping (5 nights) **and**
- Walking in the countryside, navigating on clear paths (5 days)

You should be able to navigate at about NNAS bronze level before you join a training course (see www.nnas.org.uk/).

First Aid Requirement

A current First Aid certificate is required for this award to be valid.

The First Aid course must be:

- Assessed and certificated
- Delivered by an HSE approved provider
- Minimum of 16 hours of instruction
- Specifically relevant to outdoor leadership

The same course is required for MLTUK qualifications such as the Single Pitch and Mountain Leader Awards.

You must bring a valid First Aid certificate with you to your assessment.

Scope

Leadership of walking expeditions in normal rural, open countryside or forest (i.e. recommended Bronze and Silver DofE expedition terrain and conditions, as defined in the DofE Handbook).

This includes:

- *Direct, indirect and remote supervision*
- *Open countryside and farmland where outside help (e.g. a hamlet or well-travelled road) is easily accessible within 30 minutes*
- *Journeys must be planned to finish two hours before sunset*
- *Camping in sheltered, accessible locations*

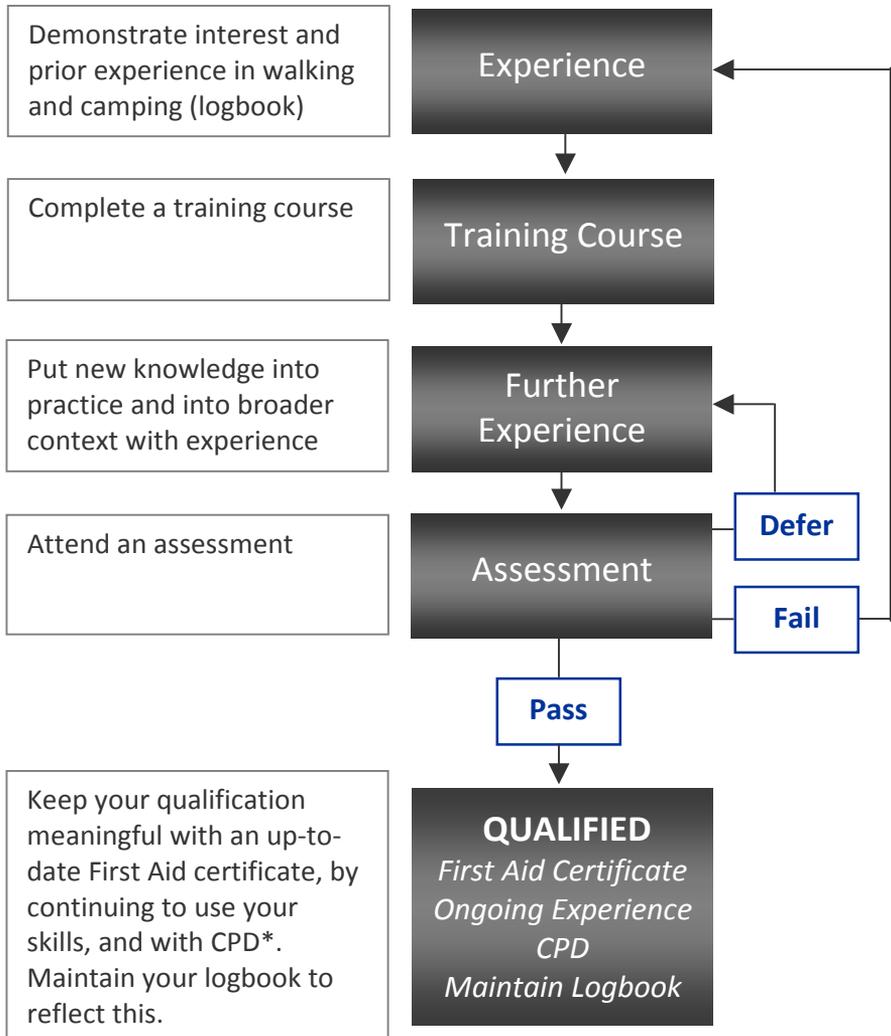
This excludes:

- *High or remote country (mountains, upland, moor, bog or fell)*
- *Areas where a trip or slip could result in serious injury or fatality*
- *Planned night journeying*
- *Winter conditions (i.e. where snow is falling, is on the ground or is forecast; ice, extreme cold or other inhospitable weather conditions)*
- *Camping in remote locations*

The onus is on the Expedition Leader to decide whether an expedition area is suitable. They should consider:

- a) Whether the terrain and conditions fall within the scope of this award
- b) Whether they have sufficient competence, confidence, and experience to be leading a given group in any given area/conditions.

Training Process



*CPD = Continuing Professional Development

Logbook

Your logbook gives tutors, assessors and employers an indication of your experience.

The CLA is awarded on the basis of:

- a) *The skill, judgement and expertise that you show during your assessment*
- b) *The depth and breadth of your experience*

For this reason the Logbook should be viewed as an important part of demonstrating your professionalism and competence.

You have two types of experience to show:

1) Personal Walking/Camping

Past experience of personal walking and camping.

- 5 days walking
- 5 nights camping

This could include anything from a day walk in the South Downs to an expedition along the West Highland Way. Camping may be family camping with a car, or as part of a lightweight expedition.

If you can't remember exact dates then put at least the year and season. If there were any notable events or difficult conditions, then write a comment.

2) Leading Walking and Camping Groups

Considerable experience of leading young people is a prerequisite.

If you are not a qualified youth-worker or teacher, you must have 10 days' and 5 nights' of logged experience leading, or assisting with the leadership of walking and camping. Again please comment on noteworthy events!

Training Course

The training course runs over 3 days, and includes a camping expedition. It assumes basic competence in country walking and camping.

Bringing together candidates with this knowledge will promote discussion and practice sharing. Candidates without basic competence are unlikely to absorb the information delivered on the course or to contribute to discussion, and so will be asked to leave the course.

A common format for the training course is:

- Intro Day (some classroom-based theory and some navigation)
- Camping weekend (this is a lightweight, self-sufficient expedition)

The priority is to cover skills specific to expedition leadership that might be difficult to learn outside a training course. Please bear in mind that the course cannot cover every aspect of every part of the syllabus.

Candidates should ensure that they develop sufficient skill and knowledge before attending an assessment (and in general before leading expeditions).

Exemption

Exemption from training will be granted to those with:

- ML training
- WGL training
- BEL2 or BEL3 assessment

There is no exemption from consolidation or assessment. Candidates going straight to assessment should ensure that they have experience of assisting with at least three camping expeditions.

Consolidation

At the end of your training course your tutor will give you a consolidation plan, which will outline areas on which to focus and the experience you need to gain before assessment.

The usual requirement is for candidates to assist with three lightweight camping expeditions, where assisting means active involvement in planning, training, supervision, and decision-making. If the Training Course Director feels a candidate is exceptionally strong they may reduce this to two or even one expedition.

For candidates with only the minimum prerequisites further experience may be required, along with other specific recommendations.

The consolidation plan gives minimum requirements. We strongly advise that you exceed them and continue to gain experience until you feel prepared for assessment.

There is no time limit on the consolidation period, although there may be practical constraints due to availability of assessment dates, and this should be discussed with your Course Provider.

Assessment

Assessment takes the form of a two-night lightweight camping expedition. Your assessor may send you a home exam paper in advance.

You should bring your logbook with you, containing:

1. Endorsement Page with Training Course sticker
2. *Personal Walking and Camping* Logbook Pages
3. *Leading Walking/Camping Groups* Logbook Pages
4. Training Course Report
5. Consolidation Plan

6. Completed Personal Reference
7. Valid First Aid Certificate

There are three possible results:

Pass

The candidate has shown the required skills and knowledge throughout the syllabus; and has shown the necessary experience and attributes, such as responsibility and judgement.

Defer

The candidate has shown the required skills and knowledge in some areas of the syllabus, but there are either some knowledge/skill gaps, or they have not shown the necessary experience or attributes.

In this case the Assessor will discuss what additional experience they should gain before attending a reassessment. Reassessment may be a full assessment or some specific part of it, as the assessor sees fit.

Fail

The candidate has globally not shown appropriate levels of skill, knowledge, or other attributes. They will be required to gain further experience and then attend another training course.

Appeals and Complaints

Appeals and complaints should be made in writing to the awarding body. After an investigation, the awarding body will inform the complainant and others involved, in writing, of the result.

Syllabus

1. Navigation
 - *NNAS silver level*
 - *Low-visibility / night navigation*
2. Route-planning
 - *Able to plan a route appropriate for the terrain, conditions and attributes of the group, and within the recommended scope of this award*
3. Campcraft and expedition skills
 - *Complete a 2-night self-sufficient camping expedition*
 - *Choose and use equipment appropriately*
 - *Teach and demonstrate safe use of both methylated spirit and gas stoves*
4. Leaders' equipment
 - *Choose appropriate equipment to carry as an expedition leader*
5. Judgement and risk management in day-to-day situations
 - *Aware, with perspective and realism, of risks associated with camping expeditions*
 - *Effectively mitigate those risks in the field through risk-benefit analysis*
 - *Adopt leadership and training priorities that will mitigate those risks (e.g. risk management, road safety drills, ensure appropriate participants' skill level and equipment)*
6. Leadership and group management in high-pressure situations
 - *Make good judgements and act appropriately in high-pressure situations*
 - *Maintain effective leadership and group management when under pressure*

7. Emergency procedures
 - *Describe appropriate action in an emergency where outside help is required*
 - *Train others to make good judgements about how to act in an emergency*
8. Legal responsibilities and good practice
 - *Understand the relevant laws and legal responsibilities (e.g. professional duty of care)*
 - *Understand types, and importance, of insurance*
 - *Understand the relevant good practice guidelines and regulations (e.g. OEAP Guidance, MLTUK National Guidelines, leader record of training and competence where subjects are safety critical (e.g. stoves, road safety))*
9. Environment and Access
 - *Respect residents, other users of the area, and the environment. "Leave no trace."*
 - *Understand local and national legislation regarding access to the countryside (e.g. types of public rights of way, CRoW act)*
10. Weather
 - *Know the importance, and sources, of up-to-date weather forecasts: their relevance, limitations and accuracy; and consequently make appropriate decisions (e.g. route, leader's equipment and participants' equipment)*

A current two-day First Aid certificate is required for validity of the award

Course Providers' Notes

Course Provider and Tutor Requirements

Training Course Providers must have:

- ML qualification (or above)
- Significant experience of leading expeditions
- Attended a CLA Course Provider Workshop

Assessment Course Providers must have all of the above *and* have attended a:

- Mountain Assessor Training Workshop at one of the National Mountain Centres (e.g. Plas y Brenin, Glenmore Lodge)

Assisting Course Tutor requirements:

- WGL qualification (or above)
- Significant experience of leading expeditions

Provider Costs

In addition to the Course Provider Workshop, there is an annual subscription fee that helps cover running costs and moderation. For up-to-date fees please see the website:

www.countrysideleaderaward.org

CLA Course Provider Workshop

These are one-day workshops. Course Providers must attend an update course every three years.

Staff to Candidate Ratios

Training

Ratio = 1:6

Minimum group size: 4

Maximum group size: 12

Assessment

Ratio = 1:4

Minimum group size: 4

Maximum group size: 8

The Course Provider must be present throughout the contact time of the course. If another tutor assists them, then the Course Provider should ensure that:

- **On Training Courses** the Course Provider's time is distributed evenly between all candidates.
- **On Assessments** the Course Provider spends sufficient time with each candidate to make a decision about their result. This may mean spending longer with borderline candidates.

Moderation

Generally the first course that a new Course Provider delivers is moderated, after which courses are moderated as appropriate.

Moderation is an essential part of quality assurance, and is paid for by candidate registration fees and the Course Provider annual subscription.

Resources

Advice and Guidance

Current Advice from Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP): www.oeapeg.info/

National Library – General Resource Materials and Links
www.national-library.info

Department for Education Advice (HASPEV replacement):
media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/health%20and%20safety%20advice%20on%20legal%20duties%20and%20powers%20updated%2012%20december%202011.pdf
You may need to copy and paste this link into your browser.

HSE Advice:

Document: www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf

Web Page: www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.htm

MLTUK Guidelines:

www.mltuk.org/downloads/National_Guidelines_2009_internet_colour.pdf

DofE Leaders' Resources: www.dofe.org/en/content/cms/leaders/

National Navigation Award Scheme: www.nnas.org.uk

Current Discussion

Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel: www.oeap.info/

Learning Outside the Classroom: www.lotc.org.uk

CLA Documents

Updates to this document and logbook pages:
www.countrysideleaderaward.org/downloads/

