

# British Caving Association

## How to book onto a course

### Register with scheme

All candidates wishing to book onto a training or assessment course must be registered with the LCMLA & CIC award scheme. Candidates need only register once, for which there is a one-off fee for both the Local Cave and Mine Leader Award and Cave Instructor Certificate schemes. To register;

- Click here: <https://britishcaving.azolve.com/> and sign up
- Click on "Membership" and purchase LCMLA/CIC Scheme Membership
- A video which walks candidates through the sign-up process available here: <https://youtu.be/jo9IuUmx5FY>

### Register for a course

Courses are delivered by Trainer/Assessors following the award scheme syllabus. Trainer/Assessors must register all courses with the Qualification Management System (QMS), however in some cases may choose not to advertise the course publicly on the system.

Candidates can only book onto a course if the pre-requisites are met.

### Book onto a course through the Qualification Management System

- Log onto the QMS: <https://britishcaving.azolve.com/>
- Find a course
  - Click on Events & Courses
  - Select course type then region
  - Select a course
  - Click "Add to cart" (note in most cases candidates are unable to book onto a course if they do not meet the pre-requisites)
  - **Follow the payment method, even though the payment will be zero, and complete the order**

### Book onto a course direct with a Trainer/Assessor

If booking directly with a Trainer/Assessor, or for courses not advertised on the system, candidates will need to provide the following details (in the same format registered with the QMS) to the Trainer/Assessor so that they can add candidates to the course:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Membership Number (note this starts with ME)
- Date of Birth

In both cases, once booked onto a course the Trainer/Assessor will contact candidates with joining instructions, booking conditions and invoicing details.

**Please be aware that Trainer/Assessors may remove candidates from a course if the Trainer/Assessors bookings terms and conditions are not met.**

## Cave Leader Core Skills Assessment

A one-day practical; personal skills, equipment and competence underground assessment in a horizontal venue not well known to the candidate.

### Pre-requisites

Candidates must have attended a Cave Leader training course (or in exceptional circumstances have been granted exemption from training) prior to attending this course.

Prior to presenting for assessment candidates must evidence that they have sufficient personal experience in a variety of caves. As a guide, the minimum experience expected is:

- One-year caving with at least 30 trips in at least 10 different systems across at least 2 different regions, **including 5 quality trips**.
- A proportion of these should be as a leader under supervision.
- Some trips may be above and beyond the remit of the award

A **quality trip** should satisfy at least 4 of the following criteria:

- Exploration of a new route or cave (new to the candidate that is),
- Incorporates at least 4 to 5 hours of underground exploration.
- An experience that develops an individual's caving and mining knowledge, skills and awareness.
- Incorporates caving exploration skills above the level of the candidate's qualification.
- Of the candidate's own making i.e. the candidate is to lead the trip, or it is one done with peers and not led by an external source.
- Involves the application of vertical skills, digging or exploration.
- Exploration of caves with a streamway that responds to rainfall.
- Candidates are to nominate 5 logged trips as quality days and justify this selection to the Trainer/Assessor using the above criteria.

### Course Overview

A ratio of 1 Trainer/Assessor to 2 candidates for this module. (It can be 1:1). The assessment must be conducted by a different Trainer/Assessor from the one who delivered the training for this module. Practical assessments normally take up a full day with at least 4hrs spent underground. The core skills assessment can be taken in any region.

The first part of the assessment is theoretical and is normally based upon a written response to a question paper based on the content of the assessment. The paper is completed in the candidate's own time and is unsupervised. If desired, a candidate may opt to cover this work orally, though this will increase the duration of the assessment.

The second part of the assessment is a practical assessment at an appropriate location underground. Scenario-based questioning is sometimes used by assessors in

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areas such as dealing with emergency situations but will not be used extensively to assess leadership skills. Trainer/ Assessors must ensure that it is made clear to candidates when scenario-based questioning is to take place. Where a candidate is deferred they must in general return to the original Trainer/Assessor – but can opt to do a complete reassessment with any Trainer/Assessor except the Trainer/Assessor that delivered training. If a candidate 'fails' they may choose any Trainer/Assessor for reassessment except the Trainer/Assessor that delivered training. It was also agreed that safety issues which require the candidate to go underground again will be an automatic fail. Issues such as geology weakness would mean a defer and can be resolved by an interview.

The Trainer/Assessor has the right to terminate the assessment if the candidate is not up to the required standard in fundamental areas of the syllabus relating to safety or conservation.

## Resource Links

- [Cave & Mine Leader: Ropework](#)
- [Weather and its Effects on Caves](#)
- [Cave & Mine Leader: Water Safety](#)
- [Cave Emergency Card](#)
- [Long Churn Flash Flood Presentation](#)
- [Hydrology of Goydon Pot and Manchester Hole](#)
- [Radon](#)

## Syllabus

The full checklist used by Trainer/Assessors which forms the syllabus for this award is provided below. Candidates should ensure they are familiar with all aspects of the checklist prior to booking an assessment.

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## Core Skills Assessment Checklist

### Pre-trip checks

Weather Forecast & Sources  
Water Levels and Fluctuations – recent rainfall / catchment areas  
Effects of Bad Weather – surface  
Access Procedures  
Conservation Awareness – surface  
Destination Notes  
Cave Rescue Call Out Procedure  
Guidebook / Survey Information  
Navigation – surface  
Clothing – suitability for wet / dry venues  
Helmet / Belt / Boots – suitability  
Lighting – suitability / duration / maintenance etc  
Technical Gear – suitability / limitations / maintenance of rope / krabs / sling etc

### Underground emergency gear

Spare Lighting – suitability / duration  
First Aid Kit  
Emergency Food  
Survival – shelter / warmth  
Knife  
Writing Material

### Underground hazards

Pollution  
Weil's Disease  
Radon Gas  
Loose / Slippery Rocks  
Holes  
Deep / Fast Water  
Awareness of Flooding – speed of / likely effects  
Evidence of cave's reaction to Flooding  
Difficulty of Rescue  
Statistics / Common Rescue Incidents

### Conservation & access

Site Specific  
General  
Public Relations

### Cave environment

Basic Surface Geology / Topography / Karst features  
Cave Development / Bedding & Joints / Passage Shapes  
Cave Deposits  
Temperatures / Draughts  
Flora & Fauna  
Fossils  
Formations (speleothems)

### Technical skills

Surface navigation in Poor Visibility / Darkness  
Underground movement skills – over a variety of passage types  
Underground navigation / Survey interpretation / Timing  
Suitable Knots  
Selection and use of suitable Belay Points (natural and artificial including bolts)  
Lifelining rope only  
Lifeline using Italian Hitch / Slings / Krabs etc  
Assisted Handline / Hoist  
Traverse  
Improvised Harness – rope only / other  
Handlines – limitations / position of leader  
Unprotected Climbs – position of leader  
Use of Fixed Aids – chains / ladders / ropes  
Communications / Group Management  
Leadership / Judgement

### Accident & emergency procedures

Incident Management  
Assessment / First Aid Treatment / Plan of Action  
Rescue Call Out  
Hypothermia – Awareness / Treatment / Action  
Light Failure  
Cancellation of Destination Note  
Overdue Problems  
Access to Dry Clothing

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## Your next steps

Once a candidate has satisfied themselves that they are ready to be assessed, they can present themselves to a Cave Leader Trainer/Assessor provided the minimum personal exploration experience had been achieved. The candidate is to submit an up-to-date logbook to the Trainer / Assessor together with a list of sites covering those caves or parts thereof, that the candidate wishes to lead parties in.

Cave Leader Group Day assessment must be completed within one year of successful completion of Cave Leader Core Skills Assessment.