



Overview of the Lowland Leader Award (LLA)

The Lowland Leader Award trains and assesses candidates in the skills required to lead others on walks in lowland countryside, coast and woodland within the scope of the award.

Scope of the Lowland Leader Award Scheme

Walks within scope of the Lowland Leader Award must fit ALL of the following criteria:

- Walks must not cross any hazardous terrain (e.g. cliffs, very steep slopes, water hazards etc.).
- Throughout the walk the group should never be more than 3km away from a key access point such as a car park, lay-by or populated area. Any potential escape routes should also lie within the scope of the defined terrain for the Lowland Leader Award.
- Walks will require the ability to plan routes, use simple navigation skills using a map and compass and be self-sufficient.
- Walks must follow paths or tracks that are both marked on a map and clearly visible on the ground and that do not require navigation across untracked areas. The trail may also be all or part of 'waymarked ways' or 'looped' walks but not when they enter out of scope terrain
- Walks must use bridges or other recognized water crossing points.
- Walks must only take place in summer conditions (i.e. when there is no unavoidable snow or ice on any part of the route).



Stages in the Lowland Leader Award Scheme

- Be 18 and register for the award with Mountaineering Ireland.
- Gain relevant experience prior to attending a training course:
Either have personally undertaken and logged an absolute minimum of ten varied walks in Lowland terrain where the use of a map is required.
Or, have attended a walking and navigation personal skills training course recognised by Mountaineering Ireland or Mountain Training in the UK.
- Attend a Lowland Leader Award training course: Training courses (16 hours contact time).
The training course will focus on the skills and knowledge required by those leading groups and will assume basic competencies in personal skills such as map reading and walking on paths and tracks in Lowland terrain.
Note: Candidates registering for the Lowland Leader Award who have already undertaken training in the Walking Group Leader Award (also known as the Hill and Moorland Leader Award in the UK) or Mountain Leader Award can progress direct to assessment in the Lowland Leader Award if they have undertaken training for Mountain Leader or Hill & Moorland Leader and can demonstrate that their walking experience encompasses walks relevant to the scope of this scheme.
- Undertake a consolidation period
Prior to assessment all candidates must have completed an absolute minimum of 20 logged walks in lowland countryside (10 of these may be those logged prior to training)
At least 5 of the 20 must show progressive leadership.
Duplicated walks must not be counted in this total and walks should encompass a breadth of different lowland terrains i.e. coast, forest and farm land.
Some non-Ireland/UK experience may be included, but should be in terrain and conditions that are similar to those in the Ireland/UK and must be unguided.
- Complete an appropriate first aid course, (minimum duration of sixteen hours).
First aid courses designed to cater for those working outdoors away from immediate assistance are highly recommended.
- Attend an assessment course Assessment, (minimum of 16 hours contact time).



Expedition Skills Module

After successful completion of assessment for the Lowland Leader Award a candidate can choose to attend a two day Expedition Skills Module which is delivered as a combined training and assessment course. The module covers leading overnight expeditions, remote supervision and teaching navigation. For more information please contact the Mountaineering Ireland Training Office.

Exemption from training or consolidation period as noted above, candidates who have attended a training course in the Walking Group Leader Award (also known as the Hill and Moorland Leader Award in the UK) or the Mountain Leader Award may progress straight to an assessment course after registering for the Lowland Leader Award. Other suitably experienced candidates may apply from exemption from the Lowland Leader Award training scheme and, if granted exemption, progress straight to assessment. For further details of the exemption process please contact the Mountaineering Ireland Training Office.

Equal Opportunities

Mountaineering Ireland is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all participants in walking, climbing and mountaineering. Candidates, trainers and assessors will express a positive attitude towards equal opportunities and act as positive role models.

Complaints and appeals procedure.

Everyone has the right to complain. All complaints are subject to Mountaineering Ireland's Complaints Policy and Procedures as updated from time to time. This policy can be found on www.mountaineering.ie