

# 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 through the Qualification Management System (QMS). 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.justgo.com/> and sign up
- Click on "Membership" and purchase **LCMLA/ CIC Scheme Membership**
- BCA Membership is optional (annual fee)
- Videos supporting the use of the QMS are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/QMSSupport>

### Register for a course

Courses are delivered by approved BCA Trainer/Assessors in line with the award-scheme syllabus. All courses must be registered on the QMS. Courses may be **open**, advertised publicly on the QMS with booking via the Events & Courses area, or **closed**, arranged privately with candidates registering directly with the Trainer/Assessor.

Candidates may only book if they meet the stated prerequisites.

### Book onto an open course through the Qualification Management System

- Log onto the QMS: <https://britishcaving.justgo.com/>
- Find a course
  - Click on Events & Courses
  - Select course type then region
  - Find and 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 closed 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 manually 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.**

# British Caving Association

## Local Cave & Mine Leader Training

### Aims of the LCMLA Scheme

The **Local Cave and Mine Leader Award** (LCMLA) is managed by the British Caving Association (BCA). The scheme provides an award recognising the competence of those taking responsibility for others underground, for the benefit of employers, providers and others in positions of responsibility. Through a nationally administered syllabus reflecting current good practice, supported by a robust training and assessment framework, the scheme promotes consistent standards of leadership, judgement and technical competence, while placing equal importance on participant safety and the conservation of fragile underground environments.

The **Local Cave & Mine Leader Training** course is aimed at cavers & mine explorers who aspire to be leaders in horizontal cave and mine systems.

### Pre-requisites

- Register with the scheme/ QMS
- A minimum of 12 caving and 12 mine exploration trips, although at the discretion of the Trainer, a candidate can be accepted with less experience.

### Course Overview

A three-day (24 hours) training course with a ratio of 1 trainer to 6 candidates. At least 12 hours should be spent underground. The training course can be undertaken in any region where both caves and mines are suitable.

The training course will have some elements of personal skill development, however, will primarily focus on leadership skills and techniques appropriate for leading groups within the remit of this award. It assumes candidates will have the basic level of competence in caving.

The training course will cover the key areas of the assessment syllabus listed below, with a tailored focus on areas candidates typically have difficulty with or identify with the Trainer/ Assessor as requiring further input. QMC have prepared some resources that may support a candidate, [these are available on the BCA website](#).

Trainer/ Assessors may offer resources and guidance for a candidate to help further their knowledge however candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the syllabus prior to attending a training course so they can identify areas they are unfamiliar with and address these with their trainer.

### Resource Links

- [LCMLA Flowchart](#)
- [Mine Terminology](#)
- [Cave & Mine Leader: Ropework](#)
- [Weather and its Effects on Caves](#)
- [Cave & Mine Leader: Water Safety](#)
- [Cave Emergency Card](#)
- [Radon Underground Document](#)
- [Radon Underground Training Module](#)
- [Long Churn Flash Flood Presentation](#)

# British Caving Association

- [Hydrology of Goydon Pot and Manchester Hole](#)
- [Caving Belts](#)

## Syllabus

The assessment criteria for the Core Skills and Group Day are available below, the training course should cover the key areas of the assessment criteria although candidates will be required to further their understanding prior to assessment.

## Exemption From Attendance on a Training Course

Experienced cavers/mine explorers who already have substantial experience of personal caving/mine exploration and leading and supervising groups on underground trips may seek exemption from attendance on a training course. Exemption requests should be made via the QMCs Training Administrator via the QMS "Enquires".

There is no exemption for the assessment modules.

## Your Next Step

Once a candidate has satisfied themselves that they are ready to be assessed, they will need to identify the caves and mines they plan to lead groups in, and ensure they are thoroughly familiar with those venues in a range of weather conditions.

Candidates will also need to have logged the minimum pre-requisite personal exploration experience outlined below. Note this pre-requisite experience can include trips prior to the candidates training course.

As a guide, the minimum experience expected is:

- At least one-year's caving with at least 30 trips in at least 10 different systems across at least 2 different regions, **including 5 quality trips, and**
- At least one-year's mine exploration with at least 30 trips including **5 quality trips** in mines of different types, i.e. metal, stone and/ or slate
- 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 or mine (new to the candidate that is),
- Incorporates at least 4 to 5 hours of underground exploration.
- An experience that develops an individual's caving/ mine exploration knowledge, skills and awareness.
- Incorporates cave exploration skills above the level of the remit of the award.
- Of the candidates 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 a cave/ mine system with a streamway that responds to rainfall.

Candidates are to nominate 10 logged trips (at least 5 within caves and 5 within mines) as quality days and justify this selection to the Trainer/ Assessor using the above criteria.

The assessment process is split into two or three stages:

# British Caving Association

- **Core Skills Assessment;** which can be taken in any appropriate region however cannot be assessed by the Trainer/ Assessor who delivered the candidates training. Candidates may elect to undertake both the Cave Leader Core Skills and Mine Leader Core Skills assessments as two independent days, or undertake a combined Cave & Mine Core skills assessment, this being an extended day incorporating underground trips in both a cave and mine, followed by a
- **Group Day Assessment;** which cannot be delivered by the Trainer/ Assessor who assessed the/ either Core Skills Assessment(s) and must be taken in one of the regions the candidate intends to lead groups in. This may be a cave or a mine exploration trip. The Group Day Assessment must take place within 12 months of the Core Skills Assessment. Candidates who've undertaken their Cave and Mine Core Skills assessments independently must ensure the Group Day is completed within 12 months of the earlier Core Skills.

Candidates should approach a Trainer/Assessor independently to book an assessment. A list of Trainer/Assessors and their contact details can be [found by clicking here](#).

## First Aid Requirements

In order for an award to be considered valid, candidates must hold a current and appropriate First Aid qualification.

To meet the required standard, a First Aid course should:

- Have a **minimum duration of two days (typically 16 hours)** instruction
- **Include a formal assessment** component
- Be **relevant to working in outdoor and adventurous** environments

While the BCA/QMC does not endorse specific First Aid courses or providers, candidates are encouraged to consult the [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) website for guidance in selecting a course that meets the necessary standards and is appropriate for outdoor and adventurous settings.

# British Caving Association

## Local Cave & Mine Leader Core Skills Assessment Assessor Checklist



<b>Pre-trip checks</b>	
Weather forecast & source	
Water levels and fluctuations - effects of recent rainfall/ types of catchment areas (all regions)	
Effects of bad weather - surface	
Effects of bad weather - underground	
Access procedures	
Destination notes and call out procedure/ information	
Guidebook/ survey /online information sources	
Suitability of personal equipment - helmet/ belt / footwear	
Suitability of personal clothing for proposed trip	
Suitability of personal lighting	
Suitable technical equipment – e.g. rope/ krabs/ cowstalls and pre-use checks	

<b>Underground emergency gear</b>	
Spare lighting - suitability/ duration	
First aid kit, medication and storage	
Warmth - shelter/ spare clothing	
Emergency food	
Knife	
Writing material	

<b>Conservation</b>	
Due diligence to cave and surface conservation throughout the day	

<b>Underground hazards</b>	
Pollution	
Weil's disease/ potential infections	
Radon (see <a href="#">Radon training module</a> )	
Poor/ bad air	
Slippery/ loose/ fragile rocks	
Boulder chokes	
Falls from heights/ potholes/ edges	
Deep/ fast moving water	
Awareness of cave flooding - speed/ likely effects	
Evidence of cave's reaction to rising water levels/ flooding	

<b>Cave environment</b>	
Basic surface geology/ topography/ karst features	
Cave development/ bedding & joints/ passage shapes	
Cave deposits/ sediments	
Temperatures/ draughts	
Cave life	
Fossils	
Formations (speleothems)	

<b>Technical skills</b>	
Underground movement skills – over a variety of passage types	
Underground navigation/ survey interpretation	
Anchor selection - natural and artificial, including pre use inspection	
Knots - alpine butterfly, bowline, figure of 8, Italian hitch	
Lifeline with Italian hitch - rigging, client management, leader position, technique and limitations	
Assisted handline - rigging, client management, leader position, technique and limitations	
Traverse - rigging, client management, leader position, technique and limitations	
Spotting of short climbs - client management, leader position, technique and limitations	
Use of fixed aids (e.g. ladders, chains, ropes) - pre use inspection, limitations	
Communications/ group management	
Leadership/ judgement	

<b>Accident &amp; emergency procedures</b>	
Incident management/plan of action	
First aid treatment/ options	
Understanding of difficulty in rescue/ common rescue incidents	
How to call out cave rescue	
Hypothermia - awareness/ treatment/ actions	
Light failure	

# British Caving Association

## Local Cave & Mine Leader Core Skills Assessment Assessor Checklist (Mine specific content)

<b>Conservation &amp; history</b>	
Due diligence to both mine and surface artifacts, minerals and formations throughout the day	
General working methods (regional)	
Minerals obtained (regional)	

<b>Surface hazards (regional), e.g.</b>	
Shaft tops & ginging	
Spoil heaps	
Unconsolidated slime dams	

<b>Mine Hazards (regional), e.g.</b>	
Entrances & adits	
Roof supports/ stemples	
False floors	
Stacked deads	
Pollution/ dumped chemicals	
Weil's disease/ potential infections	
Radon (see <a href="#">Radon training module</a> )	
Poor/ bad air	
Slippery/ loose/ fragile rocks	
Falls from heights/ shafts/ edges	
Deep/ fast moving water	
Awareness of mine flooding - speed/ likely effects	

# British Caving Association

## Local Cave & Mine Leader Group Day Assessment Assessor Checklist

<b>Pre-trip planning and organisation</b>	
Suitable risk assessments and local knowledge provided for each mine/ cave of the candidate's proposed list	
Pre trip administration - insurance/ risk assessments/ medical details/ consent/ AALA requirements	
Trip plan/ destination, call out information and procedure	
Weather conditions/ water levels/ flood awareness	
Compliance with access procedures	
<b>Mine:</b> Interpretation of mine inspection reports	
Appropriate trip planned for the group, tailored to the groups needs and aims	
Suitability of clothing & personal exploration equipment	
Suitability of group clothing and exploration equipment	
Suitability of group safety equipment/ emergency kit	
Duty of care/ legal obligations/ responsibility to group and others	

<b>Conservation &amp; history (mine)</b>	
Due diligence to both mine and surface artifacts, minerals and formations throughout the day	
General working methods for the mine types on a candidates list	
Minerals obtained from the mines on a candidates list	
<b>Conservation (cave)</b>	
Due diligence to cave and surface conservation throughout the day	

<b>Trip delivery and group management</b>	
Appropriate leadership style sensitive to the group	
Care of group on route to the trip	
Effective group management/ control & safety underground	
Use of assistant leader(s) if appropriate	
Suitability of group briefings	
<b>Mine:</b> Interpretation on surface infrastructure relating to the trip	
<b>Mine:</b> Explanation of mining processes and artifacts/ infrastructure found underground	
<b>Cave:</b> Basic surface geology/ topography	
<b>Cave:</b> Input on cave morphology	
<b>Cave:</b> Input on cave life	
Due consideration to others using the venue (if applicable)	
Appropriate pace	

<b>Vertical aspects</b>	
Appropriateness of technical equipment	
Protection of group on steep ground without a rope	
Protection of group on steep ground with a rope	
Self-protection/ own progression	

**Note:** *The group day may be undertaken in either a cave or mine. Knowledge of the other environment must be evidenced either through verbal questioning during the assessment or by prior written paper.*