

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.

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Vertical Leader: Group Day Assessment

A one-day practical group management assessment **in a venue that is one at the upper level of difficulty of the sites on the candidates submitted list** and agreed with the Trainer/Assessor. In systems with simple vertical pitches (maximum vertical length of 18m) including problem prevention and solving.

Pre-requisites

- Candidates must have successfully completed the **Vertical Core Skills Assessment**.
- Candidates are expected to demonstrate sufficient logged personal experience in the venues they wish to include on their Qualification site list, to the satisfaction of the Trainer/ Assessor.
- The Vertical Group Day Assessment must be completed within 12 months of the Vertical Core Skills Assessment.

Course Overview

- Trainer/ Assessor to candidate ratio: 1:1 only.
- The Trainer/ Assessor delivering the Vertical Group Day assessment may be the same person who delivered the Vertical Leader training, but must not be the same person who conducted the Vertical Core Skills assessment.

The assessment is split into two parts:

Part 1: Theoretical Assessment

- Typically completed as a written response to a question paper, undertaken in the candidate's own time and unsupervised.
- The paper usually includes a summary of points of interest, hazards, and how the candidate plans to manage a group at each of the sites on their proposed list.
- Candidates may opt to complete this component orally, although this will increase the overall assessment duration.

Part 2: Practical Assessment

- Conducted at a suitable underground venue chosen by the candidate and approved by the trainer/assessor, reflecting the upper end of the sites on the candidate's proposed list.
- Candidates must provide their own group (minimum of 3 participants), appropriate group equipment, and may include an optional assistant leader.
- The practical assessment duration is at the discretion of the Trainer/ Assessor but will typically take a full day.

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.

Assessment Outcomes

There are two possible outcomes:

- **Pass** - The candidate has demonstrated competence in all areas of the syllabus and will be awarded the credential and qualification.

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- **Fail** - The candidate has not demonstrated competence in multiple areas or has not met the required standards for safety or conservation. A full reassessment will be required, either with the same or a different Trainer/ Assessor.

Post-Assessment Process

In the event of a failure, the Trainer/ Assessor will provide the candidate with an action plan. This plan will be uploaded to the candidate's profile on the QMS and recorded as a "Fail" credential. Please note that this credential is visible only to the candidate and the QMCs administrator.

Reassessments may be conducted by either the same Trainer/Assessor or a different Trainer/Assessor, provided neither assessed the candidate's Vertical Core Skills. All **reassessments must be completed within 12 months of the original Vertical Core Skills** assessment date unless an extension has been approved by QMC. Requests for extensions must be submitted to QMC through the Training Administrator and supported by the original Vertical Group Day Trainer/ Assessor.

The award remains valid for **five years**, provided the candidate remains active and holds a valid **First Aid Certificate**. To maintain the award beyond this period, candidates must complete one of the following before the award expires:

- Attend an **Update Workshop**
- Attend a **Cave Instructor Certificate (CIC) training course**
- Successfully completed a **CIC Module 2 assessment**

Resource Links

- [Vertical Leader Award Flowchart](#)
- [Vertical Leader: Ropework](#)
- [SRT for Leader](#)

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.

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.

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Vertical Group Day Assessment Assessor Checklist

Candidates
Name:

ME
Number:

Assessment
Date:

Assessment
Venue:

Pre-trip planning and organisation	
Suitable risk assessments and local knowledge of vertical elements within the caves and/ or mines of the candidate's list	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pre trip administration - insurance/ medical details/ consent/ AALA requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trip plan/ destination, call out information and procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weather conditions/ water levels/ flood awareness	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compliance with access procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate trip planned for the group (min 3), tailored to the group's needs and aims	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suitability of clothing & personal cave/ mine exploration equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technical equipment function/ PPE checks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suitability of group safety equipment/ emergency/ first aid kit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Duty of care/ legal obligations/ responsibility to group and others	<input type="checkbox"/>

Trip delivery and group management	
Appropriate leadership style sensitive to the group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care of group on route to and from the cave or mine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effective group management/ control & safety underground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of assistant leader (if applicable) Suitability of group briefings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Due consideration to others using the venue (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate pace	<input type="checkbox"/>

Conservation & history	
Due diligence to cave conservation or both mine and surface artifacts, minerals and formations throughout the day	<input type="checkbox"/>

Vertical aspects	
Appropriate use of leader's technical equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fitting and monitoring of group's technical equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protection of a group on at least three of the following four aspects	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caving ladder climb for group • Lower for group • Abseil for group • Technical traverse for group 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-protection/ own progression	<input type="checkbox"/>

A **technical traverse is a traverse that typically requires users to weight the rope in order to progress, and/or where an unprotected slip or fall would have serious consequences.*

Narrative/Observations/Feedback
