British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

Present

Mary Wilde	(MW)	Training Administrator
Chris Bolton	(CJB)	BCA Treasurer
Mark Richards	(MR)	AHOEC Rep
Dave Baines	(DB)	Derbyshire Panel
Rich Hill	(RH)	CIC Chair and ALO S Wales
Pete Knight	(PK)	ALO Derbyshire
Phil Baker	(PB)	CIC Panel Rep
Gethin Thomas	(GT)	QMC Deputy Chair and ALO NW Panel

Apologies

Stephan Natynczuk	(SN)	QMC Chair and ALO Southern Panel
Tony Radmall	(TR)	Voluntary Sector Rep

Abbreviations

T/A Trainer Assessor

T/Adv Technical Advisor

TC Training Committee

QMC British Caving Association Qualification Management Committee

Meeting commenced at 10:00 am.

GT chaired the meeting in SN's absence. The meeting was audio recorded solely to assist preparation of the transcript and minutes.

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

1. Previous Minutes

Accepted as a true record by RH and PK.

2. Action Register

It was agreed that each action should include a short subject heading so that its purpose is clear to readers who were not present at the meeting.

No	Action	Who	By	Status
23/09/2019				
221	**Mines document** Update 30/01/2026 Much more work done. Nearly complete. Ready for web site Update 29/05 The doc is with Gethin who has issues with some of the content sources and feels the document is still a long way off. Update 27/10/2026 Revised draft circulated. Content broadly supported, but amendments are required: reduce reliance on colour in the regional glossary; consider useful illustrations (including pillaring/cleavage); clarify that the document is for the LCMLA Mine Leader Award and explain national versus region-specific knowledge expectations. PK to amend and recirculate to relevant mine areas; GT/DB to support illustrations.	PK/GT/DB	Before next meeting	Ongoing
23/10/2023				
435	**Renaming T/A credentials** MW to create project plan for renaming T/A credentials. Update 19/01/2024 QMC ongoing. Update 26/04/2024 Project plan created. Main issue is co-ordinating the changes along with the documentation. MW to create draft updated documentation. Update 07/10/2024 Stalled due to membership onboarding.	MW/GT	Before next meeting	Ongoing

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

	Update 10/01/2025 MW and GT to discuss offline. Update 30/05/2025 MW working with JustGo but little progress. Update 31/10/2025 MW waiting for JustGo to respond. Update 30/01/2026 MW is now in contact with a back room contact. Ongoing. Update 29/05/2026 Ongoing Update 27/10/2026 No substantive update. Remains ongoing with JustGo.			
07/10/2024				
464	**Training Administrator / QMS succession planning** MW to discuss shadowing with KE and KS Update 10/01/2025 Consider adding KS ad an admin on QMS. Review who has access and remove anyone no longer involved. Create a standards document for those with access. Update 30/05/2025 ongoing. Update 31/10/2025 ongoing. Update 29/05/2026 ongoing CJB to discuss with council execs Update 27/10/2026 The action was reframed as wider succession planning. Knowledge sharing between MW and the wider BCA administration team has improved. CJB to raise general succession planning with BCA Exec.	CJB	Before next meeting	Ongoing
10/01/2025				
475	**Risk assessment guidance document** GP to discuss risk assessment doc with J P-S Update 30/05/2025 ongoing. Update 31/10/2025 Risk Assessment doc and then share with GP and GT Update 29/05/2026 Updated by RH. Latest copy to be shared with T/As and feedback within 2 weeks. Update 27/10/2026 Content is broadly agreed. RH to send the latest copy to PK. PK to complete formatting/editing	PK/RH	Before next meeting	Ongoing

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

	and ensure the hierarchy of risk controls is explicit, then circulate to RH/SN/GT/CJB for final consultation.			
30/05/2025				
481	**2027 T/A P2P / update requirements** MW to establish which T/As need a workshop or P2P for 2026 Update 31/10/2025 Discussion on issues of scheduling. 2026 sorted. MW to establish who needs to update in 2027. Update 30/01/2026 2027 list created. At present only 1 T/A needs a workshop. MW to make a proposal. Update 27/10/2026 No workshop is currently required; the small group due in 2027 can update by P2P. MW to contact those due, encourage P2P in the first instance and arrange a workshop only if required. Discharge once contacts are complete.	MW	ASAP	Active
31/10/2025				
498	**JustGo Coach Checker** GT to continue discussion with JustGo on coach checker. Update 29/05/2026 Ongoing. Update 27/10/2026 Coach Checker is working again but remains limited. GT to continue discussions with JustGo. QR-code verification on certificates is progressing.	GT	ASAP	Active
505	**Guidance for T/As following new syllabuses** Once the syllabuses are finalised RH/MR to set up a working party to draw up guidance for T/As Update 29/05/2026 Syllabuses nearly complete. PK offered to get involved. Update 27/10/2026 The new syllabuses are now published. The working group can proceed with guidance/benchmarking for T/As, using a sample syllabus section as the starting point.	RH/MR/PK	Before next meeting	Active
30/01/2026				

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

508	**SUI/BCA issue and action plan** GP to follow up SUI/BCA issue with Rostam Update 29/05/2026 On Agenda Update 27/10/2026 QMC requires an update from BCA. GT/SN to request an update from Rostam, copying Aidan; CJB to raise the matter at BCA Exec.	GT/SN/CJB	ASAP	Active
515	**Website signposting / resources for recreational cavers** CJB to discuss website sign posting with Simon Mullens to Update 27/10/2026 Relevant LCMLA/CIC resources should be tagged rather than duplicated. PK to identify material useful to recreational cavers; MW to apply the appropriate tag, seeking support from Simon Mullins/GT if required.	PK/MW	Before next meeting	Active
517	**Voluntary grant criteria** Review voluntary grant applicant requirements Update 27/10/2026 Criteria are broadly suitable, but wording should clarify that an organisation can apply only once for the same purpose and clarify eligibility where an applicant also undertakes paid caving work.	MW/RH/PB	Before next meeting	Active
27/10/2026				
519	**Bolting document** Further edit/review is required. The latest draft is to be shared for an additional review and kept as concise as possible.	PK/MR	Before next meeting	Active
520	**University / Scouts external advisory roles** Draft short guidance for award holders/CICs who may be approached to sign off university or club processes, making clear the limits of the QMC awards and avoiding inappropriate fast-track/sign-off arrangements. Separately clarify the Scouts pathway with the relevant BCA/Scouts contacts.	GT/PB/SN	Before next meeting	Active
521	**QMC financial objective** Confirm that the QMC Terms of Reference or other formal wording clearly states the aim is an approximately neutral budget, neither requiring subsidy nor deliberately producing a surplus.	CJB	Before next meeting	Active

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

522	**Incomplete course administration** Contact T/As responsible for the 11 courses run before October that remain in an authorised/incomplete administrative state.	MW	ASAP	Active
523	**Recruitment of CIC Mines T/A** Progress early recruitment of a successor/apprentice CIC Mines T/A through the CIC Panel and QMC. MW to issue the invitation when the recruitment paperwork is ready; the interview panel should include an appropriately neutral member.	RH/MW	Before next meeting	Active
524	**T/A agreement wording and visibility** Review the T/A agreement to ensure contractor status and relevant insurance wording are clear, and consider how the agreement is made sufficiently visible to T/As at renewal/course authorisation.	GT/MW	Before next meeting	Active
525	**Vertical Mine Leader prerequisite wording** Review and amend the relevant syllabus wording so mine experience refers to two mine types. Correct any transfer-syllabus copy/paste references that incorrectly specify two regions.	GT/MW	Before next meeting	Active
526	**SRT syllabus terminology** Replace 'pull-through' with 'retrievable abseil' in the SRT/leader syllabus where required, for consistency with the Vertical Core Skills wording.	GT/MW	ASAP	Active
527	**QMS feedback box guidance** Develop/communicate guidance for T/As on certificate feedback entries: brief overview of what took place, key learning points, who delivered it and the date. Explore whether help text can be added within QMS.	GT/MW	Before next meeting	Active
528	**Certificate site history / site-name changes** Investigate site-name changes causing sites to disappear from re-downloaded certificates, test the character-limit behaviour discussed, and consider a safer process/communication when site names are amended.	MW/GT	Before next meeting	Active
529	**Near-miss learning**	GT/MW	Before next meeting	Active

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

	Explore a method of sharing anonymised near-miss outcomes and learning with T/As without circulating raw submissions.			
530	**Prerequisites to deliver update workshops** Bring a proposal to the next QMC covering prerequisites for T/As to deliver update workshops, whether the current two-workshop pathway should remain, and options to subsidise/pay observers or assistants.	GT	Next meeting	Active
531	**Working With Groups guidance** Develop Olly Rees' leadership-principles resource alongside existing material into potential QMC guidance for those working with groups.	OR/GT	Before next meeting	Active
532	**Hot Topics document** Draft and circulate updated Hot Topics wording, then update the published document. Include the new SRT safety/client-welfare material, regional geology, geology for Local Cave Leaders/CICs, Adventure RMS updates, relevant syllabus changes and a reminder to download/save certificates.	GT/MW	ASAP	Active
533	**Accessibility of QMC documents** RH to consult on accessibility tools/approaches. In the interim QMC will continue producing clear plain versions while improving good practice such as meaningful alt text, avoiding essential text embedded in images, and investigating HTML/other accessible formats.	RH/QMC	Before next meeting	Active
534	**Next meeting date** Obtain SN's availability for mid-January 2027; GT to circulate a poll and confirm the meeting date.	GT/SN	ASAP	Active
535	**Transfer assessment ropework requirement** Clarify whether cave-to-mine and mine-to-cave transfer assessments require a further assessed ropework element, or whether the current wording duplicates skills already assessed.	QMC	Before next meeting	Active

3. Matters Arising

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

- The previous Scouts presentation was revisited. It had been primarily informative; no direct QMC action had been agreed at the May meeting.
- The bolting document remains in development and requires further review; Action 519 created.
- Items identified for the Hot Topics document after the May meeting had not all been carried through. This was deferred to item 20.
- Accessibility of QMC documents was identified as requiring a separate discussion under Any Other Business.

4. Chair's Report

- SN's written report was read in his absence. Since becoming Chair he has mainly been authorising invoices, normally on the day received.
- An ongoing matter involving a member in Northern Ireland appears resolved for the time being.
- SN attended both days of Hidden Earth on the QMC stand. Most conversations were with existing award holders; for future events a laptop/tablet was suggested to demonstrate QMS and QMC resources.
- SN welcomed the flow of updated QMC documents and thanked the authors/editors and MW for their work.
- The number of T/As remains a concern. South Wales and Southern England are exploring mutual support; Southern England has an enquiry from a potential new T/A.
- GT reported, as Deputy Chair, on involvement in higher-education discussions about club risk-management processes, Welsh cross-party groups relating to access/outdoor education, and an informal liaison group with other National Governing Bodies.
- Discussion highlighted a risk of universities or other organisations seeking external sign-off or fast-track qualification solutions that go beyond the intended role of QMC awards. Similar concerns were noted in relation to Scouts. Action 520.

5. Report from BCA Council Meetings

- CJB summarised Rostam Namaghi's report on Safe Adventures discussions. There is strong demand from student unions for a national 'standard'; BCA is seeking an approach that supports clubs without unnecessarily imposing formal qualifications.
- Potential BCA/QMC guidance may need to distinguish between equipment guidance, technical-adviser roles and competence/qualification assessment.
- RH updated the meeting on access to OFD for training and assessment. BCA's constitutional position is that intervention in Wales would normally require a request

from Caving Wales. RH is progressing discussions directly and may use that route if required.
- The BCA Technical and Equipment Committee is functioning again under a new convener and has resumed meetings/work.

6. Finance Report

- CJB's September review indicated that QMC is broadly on course to break even in 2026, or make only a small incidental surplus.
- Year-end reporting is complicated by income received for courses taking place in 2027 and by delayed T/A invoices.
- The committee clarified that QMC should aim for an approximately neutral budget - neither deliberately making a profit nor requiring subsidy from general BCA funds. Action 521.

7. LCMLA / CIC Statistics

- MW reported 90 registrations so far in 2026, compared with 127 in the previous year; a late-year increase is normally expected.
- Eight logbooks have been sold.
- 328 courses had been authorised, 57 cancelled and 234 completed at the time of the meeting.
- Eleven courses run before October remained in an authorised state with administration incomplete. MW to contact the relevant T/As. Action 522.
- The committee discussed possible reasons for reduced engagement in some regions/centres, including changing employment patterns, reduced university pathways, costs and a trend towards more activity-specific staff. No single cause or action was agreed.

8. CIC Panel Report

- RH reported that DB intends to step down from the CIC Mines T/A role in due course. Because the apprentice process takes time, recruitment of a successor should begin early. Action 523.
- The recruitment process will be considered by the CIC Panel and then brought through QMC; the interview panel should include someone appropriately neutral to the scheme.

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

- Insurance/licensing questions arising on group-day assessments were discussed. Members noted previous enquiries and differing insurer/organisational interpretations; no new definitive statement was made.
- It was agreed that the T/A agreement should clearly state the contractual status under which T/As are engaged and make relevant responsibilities visible. Action 524.

9. Training Administrator's Report

- MW had submitted a written report and had no additional matters to add.

10. Regional Reports

- South Wales: Dave Coulson is close to completing the apprentice T/A process. If no practical alternative is available, QMC was content for RH to observe the required assessment despite having trained the candidate being assessed, recognising the need for robustness but also for the scheme to remain workable.
- South Wales / Southern England: Southern England T/As have been invited to the first part of the next South Wales panel meeting to discuss future mutual support and panel arrangements.
- Derbyshire: no matters requiring QMC discussion.
- Northern England: DB had been unable to attend the recent panel meeting and had no report.
- North Wales: concerns were raised about consistent communication of the current guidance on cow's tails and locking karabiners. The issue had also been discussed at the recent T/A update workshop; any proposed wording change is to come back through the normal panel route.
- North Wales: QMC agreed that the relevant mine-leader prerequisite should refer to experience in two mine types. Inconsistent 'two regions' wording in related/transfer documents should be corrected. Action 525.
- North Wales: 'leading under supervision' was interpreted as the candidate leading while supervised, not merely assisting. Candidates should be broadly ready for the wider assessment pathway when presenting for core skills.
- North Wales: the SRT syllabus should use 'retrievable abseil' rather than 'pull-through' where the latter is a copy/paste inconsistency. Action 526.

11. JustGo QMS - Developments

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

- Upcoming changes: JustGo plans to move away from the separate 'qualification' category so that everything is managed as a credential. QMC is awaiting access to the sandbox to understand the practical and documentation implications.
- Certificates: work continues on revised certificate format. A QR code is expected to replace the Chair's signature and can support verification through the online system. Note that qualified leaders would need to opt in for coach checker.
- Digital Wallet: JustGo has a paid digital-wallet option that may be adopted more widely by BCA in future. No QMC implementation decision has been made.
- T/As were reminded that the QMS feedback box can carry useful information onto the candidate record/certificate. Feedback should identify the T/A and date and give a concise overview of what took place and key learning. Action 527.
- A significant system issue was noted: renaming or changing a site can result in that site disappearing from a certificate when it is re-downloaded. Candidates should retain the certificate issued at the time of qualification/update. MW/GT to investigate system behaviour and safer processes. Action 528.
- Coach Checker is operating again but remains much less capable than originally anticipated. Action 498 remains open.

12. Liaison Group Report

- No report. The liaison group was never intended to be a permanent standing group; it is convened when an issue requires joint QMC/Technical and Equipment discussion.

13. T/As - New, Resigned, etc.

- Juliet is due to leave at the end of 2026 and is not expected to undertake further work in the role.
- Dave Coulson is close to completing his apprentice T/A requirements in South Wales.
- DB's future withdrawal from the CIC Mines T/A role was noted and is being addressed through early recruitment (Action 523).
- No other confirmed changes requiring action were reported.

14. Google Forms - Review Feedback

- The feedback received was positive.
- The version uploaded for the meeting contained identifying email addresses; MW normally prepares a separate anonymised version and will ensure that the anonymised version is used.

- Feedback from the recent update workshop strongly supported not requiring every candidate to deliver a lecture/topic, which created more time for practical and discussion-based learning.

15. Voluntary Grant Requests

- One recent enquiry was not progressed because the circumstances did not clearly meet the voluntary-support purpose of the grant.
- The application criteria are broadly suitable, but should make clear that an organisation cannot repeatedly apply for the same purpose and should clarify the position where applicants also undertake paid caving work. Action 517.

16. T/A P2P / CPD

- The recent T/A update workshop had representation from all regions and focused heavily on Hot Topics, the new syllabuses and practical equipment developments.
- There was support for recognising that substantial out-of-area site reviews can involve significant unpaid work. Possible options included warning candidates that an additional charge may apply or reviewing the overall update-workshop fee structure; no policy change was agreed.
- Members requested that learning from near-miss reports be made more useful to T/As, preferably through anonymised outcomes/learning rather than raw submissions. Action 529.
- The ladder guidance remains on the document-development list after the risk-assessment, mines and bolting work.
- Questions about what T/As should check in relation to candidate/employer PPE and equipment records should be captured in the developing T/A guidance (Action 505).
- Concerns about locking-karabiner wording should be progressed through regional panels if a formal amendment is proposed.
- The group asked for clarification on whether cave-to-mine/mine-to-cave transfer assessments should reassess ropework already assessed in the original pathway. Action 535.
- The need for T/As to include their name/date and useful detail in the QMS feedback box was reiterated (Action 527).

17. T/A Prerequisites to Run Update Workshops

- The current expectation that new T/As gain experience of update workshops before independently delivering them was discussed.

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

- Members recognised the value of observing more than one workshop, but also the burden of requiring unpaid days and travel.
- Options discussed included retaining the current pathway but paying/subsidising observers, reducing the mandatory element, and setting an expectation that T/As become capable of delivering update workshops within a defined period.
- No change was agreed at this meeting. GT will bring a costed/structured proposal to the next QMC. Action 530.

18. South Wales and Southern England Panel Potential Merger

- No decision was required at this meeting. Southern England T/As have been invited to the first part of the forthcoming South Wales panel meeting to discuss mutual support and future arrangements.

19. Working With Groups - Olly Rees

- The leadership-principles document offered by Olly Rees was welcomed as a useful starting point for QMC guidance.
- GT volunteered to work with OR and combine the material with existing resources; additional QMC support was also offered. Action 531.

20. Hot Topics

- The currently published Hot Topics document requires updating and a more reliable process after each QMC meeting.
- Existing items should be reviewed for relevance/age and removed where they have become routine knowledge.
- Items to add or strengthen include:

    - The two CIC Panel documents relating to SRT safety considerations and client welfare/learning needs, with relevance to Vertical Leaders as well as CICs.
    - Regional geology and the updated geology material for Local Cave Leaders and CICs.
    - Adventure RMS safety-management updates/newsletters.
    - Relevant changes arising from the newly published syllabuses.
    - A reminder to download and retain the certificate issued after qualification/update, with signposting to MW's guidance.

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

- GT to draft wording, circulate it for comment with a deadline and then arrange publication with MW. Action 532.

Any Other Business - Accessibility of QMC Documents

- The committee agreed that accessibility needs to be addressed but recognised that there is no single colour/font/layout solution that works for all users.
- Members discussed dyslexia, colour vision, line spacing, dense text, screen readers, alt text, text embedded within images and the limitations of PDF-only publication.
- The interim approach is to continue producing clear plain/black-and-white documents while seeking better guidance and tools rather than delaying publication of essential content.
- RH will consult Xanthe about tools and approaches used for different accessibility needs. QMC should improve immediately achievable practice, including meaningful alt text and avoiding essential information that exists only as text inside an image. Action 533.
- PK and MR expressed a preference for making incremental improvements sooner rather than waiting for a complete 'gold standard'; this view was noted.

21. Date of Next Meeting

- The next meeting should be held in mid-January 2027 if possible.
- SN's availability is to be obtained first, after which GT will circulate a poll and confirm the date. Action 534.

Meeting concluded following completion of item 21.

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026

British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Qualifications Management Committee meeting held at 10.00 am 27/10/2026