

Clarification on the Hillwalking Adventure Skills Requirements & Assessment Methodology

The first recommendation is that the longer expeditions in the Adventure skills manual are used in the assessment process as they contain greater detail and more concise notes than the poster book, or the summary statements at the front of each adventure skill chapter. The information below should be used to further clarify where necessary.

All Hikes logged should have some element of off trail experience and those above stage 5 should include navigation legs in off trail locations, in different weathers and visibility conditions. For stage 7 and upwards the log books should include evidence of hiking in different geographic locations and should not include duplicate routes unless they include very different conditions, i.e. winter conditions or night navigation.

These recommendations and guidelines are for going forward and the team will assess historic experience on a case by case basis considering the best practice at the time

It must also be remembered that those who hold Mountaineering Ireland qualifications such as mountain skills that the syllabus of such awards only cover the navigation, day equipment and basic weather elements, and does not cover the broader scope of the scouting award including the camping elements

Assessment Protocols

- Whilst there are interim instructions on who can assess and to what level issued by the NYPC, the suggested best practice for this adventure skill is always the 'two down rule' where youth members and scouters can train and assess to two stages below their stage up to assessment for stage 7. For Stage 8 and 9 a peer review protocol is used. In practice 2 stage 9's sign off a stage 8 and two different stage 9's then sign off the stage 9, thus ensuring all stage 9's have a well rounded approach to the skill.
- The competency statements as outline in the A4 Manual are the minimum standards required and candidates should complete all competency statements fully and be able to repeatedly demonstrate all of the skills at each stage.
- Adventure skills are not section specific and as such require a group not a section approach. It is recommended that the Group Council appoint one person take responsibility for the camping adventure skill, ensuring that the whole group is applying the skills and stages evenly across all sections. Ideally a group database should be maintained for all adventure skills.
- A hillwalking logbook is now available and the idea is that the logbook is presented as part the assessment.
- Any requirements for the number of hikes completed should be in addition to the previous stage.
- Assessors should satisfy themselves that the candidate for assessment does hold the stage previous to the stage being assessed

- Members being assessed should indicate that they want to be assessed as part of the planning of the activity so they can be observed. Badges should not be handed out or competency statements signed off in logbooks for attendance on an event without a pre-planned assessment.

Mentors

Prior to starting work on stage 8 you should identify a Stage 9 holder who will act as a mentor and discuss your plans in advance. As the expeditions that are undertaken in stages 8 and 9 can vary significantly in location, scope, activity and section it is impossible to write a single criteria to 'fit all' and your mentor's job is to guide you to ensure that your work will be to the high standard required

ML Award Holders

Holders of the Mountain Leader award, who supplement it with the required camping requirements and knowledge of leave no trace will be awarded their stage 8 award on completion of an induction to the scout scheme.