

OUWC - Trip Leader Safety Document

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Abbreviations

OUWC	Oxford University Walking Club
TLSD	Trip Leader Safety Document
T&SC	Trip and safety coordinator
TrO	Training officer
TO	Trip Organizer
TL	Trip Leader
TGM	Termly General Meeting
GoE	Group of equals
HML	Hill and Moorland Leader
ML	Mountain Leader
WML	Winter ML
ASO	Area Safety Officer for Sport (of Oxford University)

`The club' refers to OUWC, and `the university' refers to Oxford University.

1. Club trips

Each club trip is either a led trip or a group of equals trip. This is known as the type of the trip, and any member of the club who goes on a club trip is referred to as a participant of that trip. All participants on all club trips must be members of OUWC.

This document does not apply to local walks. Local walks may be organised by any member of the club, are open to anyone and take place in and around the local countryside. In June 2002 the ASO accepted that OUWC club members could be reasonably expected to lead such walks in a safe manner and as such local walks fall outside of the scope of this document.

The remainder of this document details the procedures and safety practices governing club trips.

1.1 Types of club trip

- **A led trip** is a trip which has designated leaders. The leaders must satisfy all requirements detailed elsewhere in this document. In particular, it is the responsibility of the leaders (in consultation with participants) to both plan and navigate the walk(s) of a led trip. The trip leaders have a duty of care to the participants of the trip.
- **A group of equals trip** is a trip comprised entirely of people who consider themselves capable of carrying out the walk(s) proposed, without being led, and in the company of individuals of similar experience to themselves. Each member of the group is fully responsible for his/her own safety and conduct while on the walk.

At least two of the club trips in each term must be led trips.

1.2 Creation of club trips

A club trip can be created by one of the following methods, and not in any other way.

1. Towards the end of one university term, a trip planning meeting takes place, chaired by the T&SC, at which potential TOs suggest trips for following vacation and the next university term. A proposed trip may become a led trip if both the T&SC and the TO both agree to a location, and provisional date(s). The T&SC must subsequently inform the committee.
2. At the request of the T&SC, the committee may, at any time, in a committee meeting or via email, create a new led trip by means of a simple majority vote. Before the vote, the new led trip should have a TO, location and proposed date(s).
3. Each potential GoE trip must be proposed to the committee by the T&SC, who must detail the proposed TO, trip location, and date(s). The trip becomes a GoE trip if both (a) the committee approves the trip by at least a 75% majority of votes cast (via email or at a committee meeting) and (b) both the T&SC and the training officer approve the trip.

All Club Trips must be registered with the Area Safety Office for Sport (ASO) using the Trip Registration Form.

1.3 Advertising club trips

Only a club trip may be advertised as an official OUWC trip. It is the responsibility of the committee, in particular the president and the T&SC, to advertise club trips to the club's members. Typically this would be done both by email and at a designated sign-up event at the start of each term.

2 Trip organization

The Trip Organiser (TO) of any club trip is the member of the club who undertakes to organize the trip. Information and guidelines on organising and running a Club Trip are provided in the Trip Guidance Notes. Every club trip has a TO, but more than one person may be designated TO for a single trip¹. On a led trip, the TO may be one of the trip leaders. The TO is responsible for the administration of the club trip, including the trip's finances and the trip's paperwork. Every club trip must be registered with the ASO, and this is also the responsibility of the TO.

The TO should book accommodation and organize the loan of Club equipment to participants of the club trip. The TO may delegate parts (e.g. shopping, cooking) of their work to other participants of the trip.

The TO for each club trip must provide the T&SC with an A4 poster, intended to advertise the trip, detailing their trip type, location, date, cost, and a brief equipment list.

2.1 Paperwork associated to a club trip

There are different participation statements for club trips and GoE trips. It is the responsibility of the TO to ensure that, before their trip has left Oxford, every participant has signed an appropriate participation statement, and the participation statements are left in a pre-agreed pigeonhole, as specified by the T&SC. When registering the trip with the ASO, the TO must inform the ASO of which pigeonhole is used. The TO must send a list of participants' names to transport@sport.ox.ac.uk, on (or before) the Thursday before the trip commences.

It is the responsibility of the TO to ensure that him/herself and all Trip Leaders sign the Trip Leader and Organiser Agreement, and that it is received by the Trip and Safety Coordinator before the trip commences.

The TO should make sure that each vehicle used by the trip contains a copy of the following documents: (1) Trip guidance notes (2) Risk assessment (3) TLSD (4) Incident Card and (5) Minibus drivers' advice sheet. The T&SC should be able to provide up to date electronic copies of all such documents on request. Any significant injury or threat to the safety of the participants of the trip should be recorded on the incident card. In this case the TO should contact the University Security Services (on 08165 289999) and inform them of all the details of the incident.

¹ For clarity we assume in this document that the TO is only one person.

2.2 Groups of Equals trips

It is the responsibility of the participants on a GoE trip to plan the walk(s) which will take place on the trip, and inform other participants of their plans before the trip has left Oxford. It is the responsibility of each participant on a GoE trip to make an informed judgement on whether he/she is able to safely participate in the proposed walk(s). All participants on a GoE trip are required to certify that they are able to navigate safely within areas of the planned walks, even in the event of nightfall or bad weather.

Before a GoE trip leaves Oxford, the TO must have informed the T&SC of the planned walks, and the T&SC must have agreed to the proposals. Any subsequent change may only be made with the agreement of all the participants on the trip.

The TO of a GoE trip must have an in-date first aid qualification satisfying the requirements detailed in A.4. This does not confer any additional responsibility onto the TO², but is intended only to facilitate communication within the group should the planned walks have to be altered (e.g. due to fatigue, blisters or other minor injury, etc.).

The participants of a GoE trip are required to walk in groups of at least two people (except in an emergency). Each morning, before setting out, each group of walkers must leave a detailed written description of their planned route(s) with the TO. The TO should place the descriptions of planned routes in a place that all members of group will have access to upon completion of their routes (e.g. hut/tent, with multiple copies in multiple places if necessary).

² If the TO acts in his/her capacity as a trained first aider on the trip, then the action takes place on a personal basis and not as a representative of OUWC

3 Leader/terrain requirements

Members of the club may become leaders via the procedure detailed in Section 3.1, and by no other means. There are four levels of leader, and each led trip must have leaders of appropriate levels, as detailed in Section 3.2.

GoE trips do not have leaders. The remainder of Section 3 will refer only to led trips.

3.1 Levels of Leader

Every new leader, of any level, must be approved by the committee, through a simple majority vote. This should be recorded in both the minutes of the committee meeting and in the clubs trip & safety file. Every leader (incl. assistant leaders) must have an in-date first aid qualification, from a first aid course that satisfies the requirements detailed in appendix A4

Full leaders

Every full leader of the club has a level, as detailed in the following table. A member of the club is only a leader if in-date copies of the certificate(s) of the appropriate qualification(s), including first aid, are within the club's trip and safety file. The T&SC is responsible for the safe keeping of the clubs trip & safety file.

Level of Full Leader	Qualification(s) required (in addition to first aid and committee approval)
level 1	None
level 2	Hills and Moorland Leader training and/or assessment.
level 3	(Summer) Mountain Leader training and/or assessment, or upgrade from assistant leader scheme
level 4	Winter Mountain Leader and/or assessment

For all levels, any equivalent/higher qualification recognised by MTUK is accepted, e.g. the Mountain Instructor Award would qualify an individual to be a level 4 leader.

Assistant Leaders

Any member of the club who has completed the Mountain Skills Course as part of the HMS training scheme is eligible to become an assistant leader with the club. As with full leaders, all assistant leaders must be approved by committee, in addition to holding the relevant, in-date first aid qualification (see appendix A.4). The responsibilities of an assistant leader are the same as those of a full leader, as described in Section 3.3.

An assistant leader, or group of assistant leaders should not lead a planned walk without the presence of a full leader in the group. This ensures both the safety of the group, and the transfer of knowledge/club culture between the full and assistant leaders.

For the purposes of fulfilling the requirement for the minimum number of leaders on a given trip (See Section 3.2) an assistant leader is given the same value as a full leader, however on any given trip, half of the number of leaders needed for the requirement set out in Section 3.2 should be full leaders, in order to realistically fulfil the above criteria for leaders on any given walk.

After a minimum of 2 trips as an assistant leader (both of which must be on terrain of level 2 or above, of which at least one must be on level 3 terrain) the assistant leader is eligible to become a full leader (Level 3). This requires committee approval in the same manner as all other leadership approvals (see above). Once full leader status has been granted, the leader has the same status as if they were an ML trained full leader, with the exception of not being permitted to lead on scrambles (as defined in Appendix A6). The skills imparted by becoming a full leader through the assistant leader scheme may not be sufficient to cover leading a group on scrambling terrain (as defined in Appendix A6).

3.2 Table of requirements

Every led trip must have at least 2 leaders for each 17 participants. To be precise, each led trip must have at least two leaders, and a led trip with n participants must have at least $2n / 17$ leaders, rounded up. All leaders on a led trip must satisfy the requirements of Section 3.1.

Every led trip must have at least one leader who has previously led on a club trip. The level of leaders required for a led trip depends on the nature of the walks which take place, as detailed in the table below.

It is the responsibility of the trip leaders to know what terrain they are qualified to lead on, in accordance with the MLTUK and MLTUK HML schemes, and to ensure that the walks on a led trip are planned in such a way as the terrain covered is appropriate to their level of qualification. Full description of the terrain suitable for leaders with the Walking Group Leader, Mountain Leader, qualifications (etc.) can be found on www.mlte.org.

Terrain Type	Minimum level of leader required
Any led trip which involves winter conditions.	4
Any led trip which involves wild camping and/or mountainous terrain.	3
Led trips to remote upland areas, but not on mountainous terrain.	2
Led trips to coastal or other non-remote areas.	1

In the above table, *mountainous terrain* refers to terrain which is either steep, rocky, has loose ground, or is otherwise outside of the remit of the Hill and Moorland Leader qualification. Non-mountainous terrain includes that which is commonly referred to as moorland, hill, fell, bog, down, etc. *Winter conditions* refers to any walk which takes place on significantly snowy or icy terrain, or in a situation where there is a substantial snowfall forecast.

As a rough guide, most of the Lake District, Snowdonia, Brecon Beacons and Galloway hills (amongst other areas) is mountainous terrain. However, Dartmoor, the Yorkshire Dales and the Peak District are remote upland areas which contain only small pockets of mountainous terrain.

Remote upland areas include, but are not limited to: Snowdonia, the Lake District, the Galloway Hills, the Cambrian Mountains, the Brecon Beacons, the Cheviot Hills, Dartmoor, the Peak District, the Yorkshire Dales, the North York Moors, non-coastal parts of Exmoor, non-coastal parts of Northumberland.

Coastal/non-remote areas include, but are not limited to: All coast paths, Bodmin moor, the Northumberland Hills, the Northumberland Coast, the White Peak District, Stiperstones, the Mendip Hills, Shropshire, Cornwall, Dorset, the South Downs, the Gower Peninsula, Holy Island, the Chiltern Hills, the Cotswold Hills, Stonehenge, the Malvern Hills, Hadrian's Wall, Kielder Forest, the Forest of Dean, the New Forest.

Graded scrambles (as defined in appendix A6) of Grade 1 classification may be attempted in line with the requirements expressed in the Risk Assessment: a Level 3 or 4 leader may lead four participants on the scramble. The leader must be a full Level 3 leader and not an assistant leader. Leaders who have achieved Level 3 status through the assistant leader scheme and not Mountain Leader (or equivalent training) are not eligible to lead scrambles (as defined in Appendix A6). Grade 2 and 3 scrambles must not be attempted on led trips.

3.3 The role of trip leaders

Trip leaders have a duty of care to the participants of a led trip. It is the responsibility of trip leaders, in consultation with the participants, to plan and lead the walks in a manner which is safe, practical and enjoyable for the participants. Trip leaders are responsible for ensuring the walks remain within the category of terrain on which they are qualified to lead (see Section 3.2).

Trip leaders should be aware of the local weather forecast, and of the hours of daylight of the appropriate time of year. They should be confident in their ability to navigate the walk, even in the event of bad weather. They should also be confident that they can react to accident or injury in the manner which is specified by their training.

3.4 Selection of trip leaders

It is the responsibility of the T&SC to keep track of the leaders currently within the club, and to find appropriate leaders for each trip. The T&SC must ensure that the leaders of each trip satisfy the requirements detailed elsewhere in this document. The trip leaders must be approved by the T&SC at least two days before the trip begins.

If the T&SC is unable to find appropriate leaders for a led trip, then then the T&SC must decide to either (1) redirect the trip to a different location (for which appropriate leaders are available) or (2) cancel the trip. In either case the T&SC must inform the committee at the next committee meeting, and all participants of the trip must be offered the option of a full refund.

Note that, as a consequence of the above paragraph and Section 1.2, a led trip may not be reclassified/re-advertised as a GoE trip to remedy a lack of suitable leaders.

Appendix: Other aspects of club trips

A.1 Financial aspects

OUGC will absorb any reasonable profit or loss arising from its club trips. Any disputes arising over what is a reasonable profit/loss must be brought to the next TGM.

The T&SC must supply each TO with a spreadsheet able to calculate the cost per person of the trip, when supplied with the estimated costs of that trip. It is the responsibility of the TO to ensure that the trip is priced in such a way as the trip is intended to make neither a substantial profit, nor a substantial loss.

The committee may choose, by means of a simple vote, to include a contribution to the cost of future leader training into the cost of club trips. Such a decision must be taken to cover all trips during at least one term. In this case, the TOs must incorporate such a cost as part of the cost of their trips.

No participant of the trip (including TMs, drivers, TO, etc.) is paid for their contribution towards the trip. However, when a cost is incurred by the trip as a whole (e.g. fuel for the minibus, communal food, etc) but has been paid for by one of the participants, the participant may submit an expenses claim form to the T&SC along with original receipts.

A.2 Responsibilities of the T&SC and TrO

The responsibilities of the T&SC have been covered throughout the TLSD and are not recounted in this section. Broadly speaking, it is the role of the T&SC to oversee the general system of club trips, advise TOs and TMs on the club procedures, and address any unusual situations which may arise. It is the responsibility of the TrO to keep track of the demand within the club for different levels of leaders. The TrO should advise members of the club of options for leader training, with a view to maintaining the number of leaders within the club.

It is the joint responsibility of the TrO and T&SC to advise the committee of appropriate levels of financial subsidy for leader training, and the timescale/conditions under which such subsidy should be delivered.

A.3 Under 18s policy

The TO of each club trip must find out the date of birth of all the Participants before the trip. The TO should inform the T&SC of any Participant who is aged under 18 years on the first day of trip. Under 18s may not participate in GoE trips, only in led trips. Any Participant who is aged under 18 years on the first day of the trip must be a matriculated member of the University.

Any potential member who is aged under 18 should be provided with a modified Membership Form when they want to join the club. This should include a Parental Consent Form and a standardised Equipment List, along with the club's Code of Practice and Risk Assessment.

The Club will advise the parents to read the guide Young People Climbing, Hill Walking, Mountaineering: A Parents Guide which is produced by the British Mountaineering Council. It can be downloaded from: <http://www.thebmc.co.uk/youth.htm> , or paper copies can be provided by the T&SC on request. The parents should also be offered the opportunity to contact the T&SC if they have any questions or concerns.

The Parental Consent Form gives parental consent for the member to participate in Club Trips for the duration of the membership. A new Parental Consent Form must be completed if the membership is renewed and the member is still under 18. These consent forms are kept by the Membership Secretary. Under 18s may not participate in a club trip unless a completed Parental Consent Form has been received.

Trip Leaders and the TO should be aware that they have a greater level of duty of care to a participant who is aged under 18 years on a Club Trip. The BMC guidance on dealing with minors should be followed. If a pub is visited on the Club Trip then the TO and Trip Leaders should be aware that a participant who is aged under 18 years is not legally allowed to purchase or drink alcohol, and will advise the participant accordingly.

If a TO or TL does not want the additional responsibility of leading such a participant then he/she should inform the T&SC of this decision. The T&SC should then explain the situation to the member and his/her parents. If the member is unable to go on another trip of the same type that term, the T&SC will place them on the priority list for next term.

A.4 First Aid Qualifications:

For level 1 leaders and TOs of a GoE trip on level 1 terrain (as defined in section 3.2):
A suitable first aid course is one that lasts a minimum of 8 hours and has been carried out in the last three years. For clarity, First Aid at Work (i.e. not outdoor-oriented) qualifications and requalifications are acceptable.

For level 2, 3 and 4 leaders and TOs of a GoE trip on level 2, 3 or 4 terrain (as defined in section 3.2):
A suitable first aid course is one that lasts a minimum of 16 hours, has been carried out in the last 3 years, contains an element of assessment and is outdoor-oriented. In addition, the content of the first aid course must include all of the following:

- 1) A system for assessing injuries while keeping oneself and rest of the group safe
- 2) Hypothermia and heat stroke
- 3) Fractures, bleeding and shock
- 4) Anaphylactic shock
- 5) CPR and choking

The content of the course must also include three out of five of the following: blisters, burns, wounds, sprains and strains.

For all levels of leader, and for TOs of GoE trips on all levels of terrain:

- 1) First aid courses must be approved by committee using the above criteria.
- 2) A photocopy of the member's first aid course certificate must be stored in the Safety File.
- 3) A member that has completed a first aid course that does not include how to call for help in the UK context must make themselves aware of any differences between their training and situations likely to be encountered in the UK through a briefing with the Training Officer and/or Trip & Safety Co-ordinator, including: legal aspects of First Aid in the UK, availability of help and Mountain Rescue, and how to call for help.

A.5 Status of the TLSD

The TLSD is incorporated into the OUWC code of practice. Any violations of the procedures detailed in the TLSD document must be reported to the ASO, by any member(s) of the club who witness them.

A list of modifications to the TLSD, including details of when they were made and by whom, must be kept in the club's trip and safety file.

This version of the TLSD was approved by the ASO and the BMC and was incorporated into the OUWC code of practice by the OUWC committee at the TGM on 7/3/12. The original TLSD was created in 2002 by OUWC and the ASO.

A.6 Scrambling

Within this document, scrambles are defined as routes on rockier terrain that involve the use of hands and often a high level of exposure to heights. On led trips, scrambling must be used as a method of getting from one point to the next as part of the route, rather than seeking out steeper parts not along the line of the journey, which would be more akin to a rock climbing activity.