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**Instructors and
Assessors Directives**

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**South African
Mountaineering
Development and Training
Trust**
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FOREWORD

This document outlines the specific details of the MDT awards and assessments and aims to give clear instructions and guidelines to how courses and assessments are to be run. This document will be of interest to both the learner and the instructor.

RECREATIONAL TRAINING COURSES

The recreational program is primarily concerned with good personal recreational practice, resulting to the safe enjoyment of the activity. It does not include leadership skills nor is it intended as a leader training program.

There is no assessment included in this section of the MDT program, and as such no certification will occur at these levels.

Some of these courses, as indicated, are recommended as feeder courses for the Leadership Training Program.

Basic Hiking Course

(Feeder course for the Mountain Leader Award)

Aims: The Basic Hiking Course is a personal recreational training course provides training for those who wish to learn to hike on trails or on very easy off trail areas safely.

Duration: 3 days

1 day theory, 2 days practical and must include at least 1 nights camping. The practical must include walking in some mountain country of southern Africa that has marked paths. The learner/s must do 4 hours of navigation on the 2 practical days using the skills they have been shown. At least 2 hours total should be in restricted visibility on a path. This could either be in mist or at night. Some easy cross country navigation can also be done. They must have the opportunity to navigate along a given course, find a suitable campsite or cave, set up a stove, cook their own meals, find suitable drinking water, identify areas for human waste. During the time they must be able to see other good or bad camping areas and to identify common hazards.

Equipment

All usual overnight hiking equipment to be shown and demonstrated.

Basic navigation

- Contour lines
- Contour intervals
- Understanding basic map scales
- Understanding basic map symbols
- Setting a map to terrain with and without the use of a compass
- Parts of a protractor compass and their uses
- Take a bearing with map and compass
- How to walk on a bearing using sighting objects
- Taking a Field bearing and its uses
- **Notes:** The navigation can be shown in theory by using instructional aids and films.

Nutrition

- Demonstrate the use of 2 different hiking stoves
- Show different types of light weight foods

Camp-craft and camp-hygiene

- Show good camping areas such as sheltered areas in trees, flat ridges and near rivers. Show dangers of flash floods, lightning danger areas and high wind areas.
- Show good areas for the latrine and speak about methods of how to dispose of human waste in the mountains.
- Show places of good water quality and when water quality may be compromised.

Basic weather

- Show what cirrus, cirrostratus, nimbostratus, cumulus and cumulonimbus clouds look like and what they mean to the hiker.
- Must also have a basic knowledge of southern African weather patterns, both in winter and summer with the emphasis on the area where the course is given.
- They must know what weather signs could bring about dangerous weather in that area.
- For example, Berg winds occur in the Drakensberg from June to November and mean that a cold front, with possible snow is approaching.

Common hazard avoidance

- Lightning - what areas of a wilderness or mountain area is considered safer, as well as what area or objects to avoid.
- Rivers – avoid camping on flood plains, narrow valleys can have flash floods, debris floating in the river
- Wet and snow conditions on slippery ground. Know the hazards of these conditions and where they could be found.
- Steep ground and how to avoid and recognize these areas.
- Bad visibility – When it can occur and what common mistakes it can bring about, missing path junctions, inaccurate time estimations.
- High winds - when they can occur, where to camp in relative shelter, lee and windward sides of hills.

Emergency procedures

- Stay calm, sit down and make a plan, carry the relevant rescue numbers, mountain rescue structures in South Africa.

When reporting an emergency /death:

Do's.....

- Stay in cell phone range or near to the landline phone that was used to make the call
- Give your name and phone number
- Give the exact location
- Give the patient's name age and gender
- Give the symptoms or problem
- The present weather conditions

Don'ts.....

- Don't panic
- Don't make hasty decisions. Most emergencies are sorted out better after a little thought and planning.
- Administer First Aid to the best of your ability and training.
- In the case of a known fatality, do not move a corpse or disturb the area until authorized to do so by the police.

The course does not cover:

- Expedition skills
- Off Trail navigation
- Improvised rescue
- Steep terrain
- River crossings
- The supervision or leadership of other hikers
- Any rope work skills

Beginner Abseiling

(Feeder course for the Abseil Supervisor Award Course)

The Abseil personal recreational training course provides training for those who wish to learn to abseil safely without a safety rope back-up.

Duration: 2 days

The aim of this course is to make a person competent at setting up a retrievable or non re-releasable abseil and being able to descend the rope safely. The course must be conducted at a natural cliff where there are sound natural anchor points and or bolted belays. The practical skills which are demonstrated and taught can be carried out in an integrated teaching environment.

Knowledge of equipment

- Show and demonstrate the following items: tubular belay devices, figure 8 descender, sit-harness types adjustment and fitting, helmets, clip-gate and screw-gate karabiners, prusik loops and 2 x types prusik knots, slings, bolts auto locking belay devices (eg Lory or Grigri)
- Identification of semi-static and dynamic ropes and their uses, certification symbols, breaking strengths of ropes and accessory cords.

Setting up a belay system:

- Natural anchors and or bolts and how to equalize the system.
- Demonstrate ropes and cordelettes.

Setting up a fixed line and retrievable abseil

- Show the difference between retrievable and fixed single rope abseils.
- Learner must set up and descend both types

Types of knots

- Figure 8 on-the-bight, rethreaded figure 8, clove hitch, 2 prusik knots

Prusiking

- Show how to ascend a rope and how to change from descent to ascent while on the rope.

Abseiling and self belay

- Show how to use a prusik and or shunt as self belay.

The course does not cover:

- The skills needed to approach and retreat from mountain crags
- Access to any location where escape is not easily possible from the top and the bottom of the abseil site

- Re-leasable abseils.
- Multiple abseils, or abseils that involve intermediate stances
- The supervision or leadership of other abseilers
- Industrial access situations

Beginner Rock Climbing

(Feeder course for Single Pitch Supervisor Award)

The Beginner Rock Climbing Course is an introductory personal recreational training course, which provides training for those who wish to be introduced to the sport of rock climbing. The course covers both Traditional and Sport climbing skills.

Duration: 2 days

This course is aimed at teaching the learner to have a basic foundation in recreational rock climbing, both Trad and Sport climbing. It must encourage the learner to want to climb more and to increase experience and therefore should be mainly practical in nature. They should get a good idea of how to set up top and bottom ropes, how to second climbs and how to clean sport routes. If they have prior experience they could be taught to do basic leading (to be done at the discretion of the instructor). The course can also include easy multi-pitch climbing with large stances where the instructor is in control at all times. The practical skills which are demonstrated and taught can be carried out in an integrated teaching environment.

Basic knowledge of equipment

- Show and demonstrate the following items: tubular belay devices, figure 8 descender, sit-harness types adjustment and fitting, helmets, clip-gate and screw-gate karabiners, prusik loops, slings, bolts auto locking belay devices (e.g. Lory or Grigri)
- Identification of semi-static and dynamic ropes and their uses, certification symbols, breaking strengths of ropes and accessory cords. Understand the differences and uses of Single and double ropes.
- Placement of cams, nuts and hexentrics.

Seconding of Traditional climbs

- Must belay the leader on double and single ropes, second climbs and remove running belays of the leader.

Seconding Sport routes

- Must belay the leader on single ropes and then remove runners from the bolts, but not thread the chains.

Top Roping

- Must set up and equalize a belay system and then belay from the top and from the bottom.

Types of climbing activities

- Understand what is free climbing, aid climbing, bouldering, mountaineering, ice climbing. Can be done by means of practical demonstration or media.

Knots and tying-in

- Figure 8 on-the-bight, rethreaded figure 8, clove hitch, 2 prusik knots and how to tie into a harness.

Basic abseiling

- Show the difference between retrievable and fixed single rope abseils. Learner must set up and descend both types.
- Show how to use a prusik and or shunt as self belay.

Prusiking

- Show how to ascend a rope and how to change from descent to ascent while on the rope.

Climbing grades

- Explain how the South African climbing grade system works.

Leading on Trad or Sport climbs

- This is done at the instructor's discretion and should show how to clip bolts or trad protection while leading.

The course does not cover:

- The skills needed to approach and retreat from mountain crags
- Access to any location where escape is not easily possible from the top and the bottom of the climbing site
- Multi pitch climbing skills
- Improvised rescue skills
- The supervision or leadership of other climbers

Rock Climbing Leader

(Feeder Course for the Rock Climbing and Mountaineering Instructor Award)

The Rock Climbing Leader Course is a personal recreational training course which provides training for those who wish to learn to lead climb. The course covers both Sport and Traditional climbing in a single and multi -pitch context.

Duration: 3 days

This course is mainly aimed at teaching the learner how to climb multi-pitch routes in parties of up to 3 people in semi remote areas. It also aims to show the skills needed to retreat from high crags. The course is usually carried out on easy multi-pitch climbs and the instructor needs to be in full control of the teaching session. Learners are required to be able to safely lead single pitch climbs on both trad and sport prior to attending. They must also be able to safely abseil without the use of a personal safety rope. They must also be able to set up top and bottom rope anchors prior to attending. The course must include at least 4 multi-pitch routes which includes climbing in pairs and in threes. The learner must also lead certain pitches and set up stances. The practical skills which are demonstrated and taught can be carried out in an integrated teaching environment.

Access & the environment

- Awareness of land owners, both private and governmental in South Africa and the differing access arrangements.
- Awareness of the impact of climbing in wilderness areas, including litter, path erosion, bolts, hygiene and security.

Equipment

- Identification of semi-static and dynamic ropes and their uses, certification symbols, breaking strengths of ropes and accessory cords.
- Understand the differences and uses of Single and Double ropes in leading and in abseiling.
- Fall factor and impact force calculation.
- Use of plaquettes (reverso) in both modes, karabiner-brake.

Knots and tying-in

- Figure 8 on-the-bight, re-threaded figure 8, Bowline, munter-hitch, alpine butterfly, clove hitch, overhand knot, double fisherman's knot, 3 types prusik knots.

Improvised techniques

- Show improvised methods of placing trad protection. E.g. stacked nuts. Descending and belaying use a munter-hitch, abseiling using a karabiner brake.
- Rope management

- The leaner must be taught to use double ropes to good effect in order to minimize rope-drag and also to simul-climb 2 seconds at the same time. Both seconds must be protected adequately including on traverses.

Stance management and changeovers

- Show multi-directional belay stance set ups, changeovers for 2 alternation leads, changeovers for 2 with one leader, changeovers with 3 person party.
- Rope coiling and stashing skills at stances.

Abseiling in a multi-pitch environment

- Improvised abseil points, retrievable abseils, self belays for abseiling and joining ropes for long abseils.

Speed climbing skills

- Simul climbing of 2 seconds at the same time, route finding and guide book interpretation, joining of pitches and moving together over easy ground in a party of 2 persons.

Improvised and basic rope skills

- Body belays, classic abseils and shoulder belays

Emergency procedures

- Relevant rescue numbers, mountain rescue structures in South Africa.
- Ascend rope using prusiks
- 3:1 haul system in the context of a normal belay setup.
- 2:1 assisted haul system in the context of a normal belay setup.

The course does not cover:

- The skills needed to approach and retreat from mountain crags
- The supervision or leadership of other climbers
- Aid climbing
- Alpine climbing skills

Beginner Ice Climber

(Feeder Course for Mountaineering Instructor)

The Beginner Ice Climber Course is personal recreational training course provides training for those who wish to learn to climb single and multi pitch ice routes.

Duration: 3 days

This course would usually involve teaching climbers good technique on steep water-ice on a high mountain cliff. Participants should have some other hiking and rock climbing experience before attending this course. The course would usually entail some top roping and seconding of easy ice routes.

Ice climbing equipment and care

- Explain what and how ice tools, crampons, ice boots and screws work.
- Adjust and fit crampons to boots.
- How to care and sharpen ice equipment.

Ice-belay setups and ice screw

- Demonstrate how ice screws are placed and removed and how belay systems are set up and equalized.

Ice climbing grading systems

- Explain how the South African technical and commitment grading system works and mixed grade system works in southern Africa.

Front pointing on ice

- Teach and demonstrate good front point technique on a bottom rope or seconding situation.

The course does not cover:

- Alpine skills such as glacial travel, avalanche awareness, twin rope techniques
- Hiking skills such as navigation and weather patterns
- The supervision or leadership of other climbers

Beginner Snow-climber

(Feeder Course for Mountaineering Instructor Award)

The Beginner Snow-climber Course is personal recreational training course which provides training for those who wish to learn to climb snow climbs and snow gullies on the African continent or other similar mountains. It would also give the participant a good grounding for climbing snowy mountains above 4000m.

Duration: 3 days

This course would usually take place in a snow gully in the Drakensberg or Cape mountains. It involves climbing and descending easy angled snow slopes and perhaps some steep sections. The participant should learn good technique when walking in crampons and using a walking ice-axe.

Snow climbing equipment and care

- Demonstrate and explain how crampons and ice -axes are used, cared for and adjusted.
- Explain how snow and mountaineering equipment differs from water ice climbing equipment.

Introduction to placing and building snow belays

- Show, bucket-seat belay, snow bollards, ice bollards, buried ice-axe belay, boot-axe belay and deadboy belay (snow-fluke).

Properties of snow

- Show layers, névé, powder-snow and basic avalanche snow block.

Snow grading systems in the world and in South Africa

- Explain to the French adjectival method and the SA system, including SA mixed grades.

Seconding snow climbs

- Spend time moving up and down snow slopes with no crampons and using crampons.
- Show slash steps, and at least 2 methods of ice axe arrest.

Moving together on a rope

- Move together up and down a snow slope or a full climb while roped together.
- Show alpine butterfly knot and correct rope coiling and tie-off.

Escape or retreat from a snow climb

- Cut and use a snow bollard for abseil.
- Snow holes and emergency shelters

- Show suitable places to build a snow bivvy. Build a snow shelter or hole.

Introduction to high altitude health problems and their avoidance

Explain in-field or in a classroom how high altitude effects the human body, its symptoms and how to avoid HAPE and HACE.

The course does not cover:

- Alpine skills such as glacial travel, avalanche awareness and crevasse rescue
- Hiking skills such as navigation and weather patterns
- The supervision or leadership of other climbers

LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM PROSPECTUS

INTRODUCTION

The program is primarily concerned with good leadership practice, resulting to the safe enjoyment of the activity. Courses are not intended as basic skills training for people who have little or no experience in the activity. These courses are intended to train “mountain leaders” and as such they are expected to already have substantial personal recreational experience in the activity or have attended an appropriate MDT Recreational Training Course.

Completion of a training course alone, without taking an assessment course, is not a qualification in itself, although it may be of considerable benefit to the trainee in their personal recreational capacity.

LEADERSHIP AWARDS PROGRAM

The program provides training and assessment in nine partially independent awards for those who are in a position of responsibility in each discipline. They are suitable for individuals working in a voluntary capacity. The separate awards cover:

Wall Climbing Supervisor

The Wall Supervisor Award provides training and assessment for those who supervise bolted top-rope and leader rock climbing on artificial walls and easily accessible natural crags. The emphasis is for the supervisor to see that safe techniques are used in a controlled artificial climbing environment and on easily accessible Sport climbing cliffs.

Duration: 2 days

Assessment: 1 day

This course must take place for one day at a bolted artificial climbing wall and another day at an easily accessible sport cliff.

Knots

- Rethreaded Figure 8, Figure 8 on the bite, clove hitch, double fisherman's knot.

Belay techniques

- Demonstrate the use of various belay plates, Figure 8 devices and auto-locking belays.
- Show good and safe techniques.

Artificial (bolted) anchor points

- Show how to clip into bolted anchors and how to recognize sub standard or weakened bolts.
- Show what a proper stainless steel bolt and hanger looks like before insertion.

Supervising top roping

- Show how to set up and supervise a bottom rope.
- Use tie-off belays and back-up belays (double belays) when beginners are learning to belay others.

Supervising bolted lead climbing

- Show how to belay a lead climber on a sport climb. Belayer stands close to the wall, watches climber, careful when leader clips the first 2 bolts, hand on rope at all times, clear communications and lowers off safely.
- Learner must be able to thread lower-off chains correctly and safely.

Lead climbing

- Learner must be able to lead a climb on an artificial wall or cliff and safely thread the lower-off chains.

Supervising bouldering

- Demonstrate good spotting.

Rope types and uses and equipment care

- Show Single and Double ropes and explain their properties and uses.
- Explain the uses of a semi static rope.
- Explain UIAA and EN labels and certifications.
- How to care for, store and clean climbing equipment.

Personal abseiling

- Using bolts as anchors teach how to abseil down a cliff or wall safely.
- Learner must get to stage of confidence where a safety rope is no longer needed.
- Teach to use a prusik as safety backup. (This is abseiling only for the supervisor.)

Technical knowledge

- Basic understanding Fall factors or impact forces in the safety chain.
- Show and explain what a fall factor is and how to calculate.

The Award does not cover:

- The skills needed to approach and retreat from mountain crags
- Multi-pitch rock climbing
- Access to any location where escape is not easily possible from the top and the bottom of a climb
- Setting up of equalised anchor systems
- The use of traditional anchors
- The skills required to supervise a group abseiling.

Prior to assessment:

- Have attended the Wall Supervisors Award Course
- At least 5 sessions of supervising groups must be recorded.
- Have lead 20 bolted lead climbs.
- Be in possession of a valid First Aid certificate.

Exception clause:

- The full course does not have to be attended if the candidate can show suitable prior experience recorded in a logbook. This must include at least 20 sessions of supervising of beginners, and the ability to personally abseil and lead bolted routes on both indoor and outdoor environment.
- If the candidate shows appropriate prior leaning an assessment may take place straight after the course. This should only be done after due consideration with the assessor making sure that the candidate will be safe and skilled and able to carry out the task properly.

Assessment:

- Use the standard MDT Wall climber theory test on Fall Factors and rope use and identification.
- 75%pass mark
- Candidate must be asked to set up a personal abseil and abseil down.
- Candidates must set up top rope on bolted anchors and supervise a small group of beginners.
- Candidates to carry out a good belay technique of a leader and lower off.
- Candidate must lead a simple sport climb and thread the chains correctly.
- This assessment can be integrated and should seek to identify if the candidate can safely manage a group of climbers within the confines of the award.
- Candidates may be coached on non safety skills.
- Candidates may not make any life threatening mistakes causing the assessor to step in.
- The instructor who presented the course may also assess the candidate.

Abseil Supervisor Award

Duration: 4 days

Assessment: 1 day

The Abseil Supervisor Award provides training and assessment for those who are in a position of responsibility while supervising abseiling up to and not exceeding 140 meters.

This course must take place for up to 4 days on an easily accessible natural cliff that has trees, bolts or bollards as anchor points. It could also be held at any artificial venue such as a climbing gym or bridge, but this should not for more than 50% of the time.

Knots

- Rethreaded Figure 8, Figure 8 on the bite, clove hitch, double fisherman's knot, Munter-hitch, prusik knots and alpine butterfly

Equipment

- Identification of semi-static and dynamic ropes and their uses, certification symbols, breaking strengths of ropes and accessory cords.
- Understand the differences and uses of Single and Double ropes in leading and in abseiling.
- Use of plaquettes (reverso) in both modes.

Belay techniques

- Demonstrate the use of various belay plates, Figure 8 devices and auto-locking belays.
- Show good and safe techniques.

Artificial (bolted) anchor points

- Show how to clip into bolted anchors and how to recognize sub standard or weakened bolts.
- Show what a proper stainless steel bolt and hanger looks like before insertion.

Group supervision

- Learners to be shown how to manage groups of beginners.
- Holding areas, landing areas, safety rails, use of helmets, assistant abseil supervisors and radio coms

Non- releasable abseils

- Show how to set up a single line abseil.

Re-leasable abseils

- Set up a releasable abseil using Munter-hitches for belays.
- Abseil and safety ropes should be separate belay systems.
- Operate system with a stuck abseiler.

Retrievable abseils

- Set up and use a simple retrievable abseil.

Ascending the rope

- Show at least 2 prusik knots and ascend the rope using just this and a few karabiners.
- Change over to abseil while on the rope and then stop and change back to ascent.
- Also show how to back up a prusik ascent using a clove-hitch or similar method.
- Ascend a single rope using one method of mechanical means.

Hauling systems

- Demonstrate and use a 3:1 stand alone system and how this system can be incorporated into an abseil set up with a safety line as the haul rope.
- 2:1 assisted haul used in an abseil set up using the safety line as a haul line.

Pick-offs (assisted evacuations)

- Demonstrate 2 two simple ways of moving a stuck abseiler from the safety backup rope onto the abseil rope and bring the person to the ground.

Local rescue structures

- Local mountain rescue structures and phone numbers.

The Award does not cover:

- The skills needed to approach and retreat from mountain crags
- Access to any location where escape is not easily possible from the top and the bottom of the abseil site
- Multiple abseils or abseils that involve intermediate stances

Prior to assessment

- Have attended the Abseil Supervisor Award Course
- Be in possession of a valid First Aid certificate
- If the course has been attended, at least 5 sessions of supervising groups must be recorded
- Have personally abseiled 20 times in 3 different areas

Exemption clause:

- The full course does not have to be attended if the candidate can show suitable prior experience recorded in a logbook. This must include at least 10 sessions of supervising of beginners, and the ability to personally abseil and use releasable abseils and ascend a rope using prusiks.
- If the candidate shows appropriate prior leaning an assessment may take place straight after the course. This should only be done after due consideration with the assessor making sure that the candidate will be safe and skilled and able to carry out the task properly in the future. The candidate must be able to complete all of the tasks listed under assessment.

Assessment:

- Use the standard MDT Abseil Supervisor theory test.. 75%pass mark
- The assessment should take place with the candidate managing a group of at least 2 people who are preferably beginners.
- Candidate must be asked to set up a personal abseil and abseil down with a prusik safety.
- Candidate must set up a releasable abseil and send beginners down using a safety back up rope.
- Candidates to carry out good belay technique and communicate clearly with the abseilers.
- Beginner abseilers must be well supervised at the top and bottom of the cliff and wear helmets at all times.
- Candidate must operate the releasable system with a stuck abseiler.
- Candidate must haul a stuck abseiler up using a 3:1 and or a 2:1 system.
- Candidate must ascend and then change to descent on the fixed rope.
- This assessment can be integrated and should seek to identify if the candidate can safely manage a group of abseilers within the confines of the award.
- Candidates may be coached on non safety skills.
- Candidates may not make any life threatening mistakes causing the assessor to step in.
- The instructor who presented the course may also assess the candidate.

Single Pitch Supervisor Award

Duration: 3 days

Assessment: 1 day

The Single Pitch Supervisor Award provides training and assessment for those who supervise single pitch traditional and sport rock climbing. It also incorporates releasable abseils and ascending a rope.

This course must take place for up to 3 days on an easily accessible natural cliff. Both Traditional and sport climbing must be taught. It could also be held at any artificial venue such as a climbing gym or bridge, but this should not be for more than 25% of the time. The emphasis of the course and the award should be to have the learner at a level where they can lead both Traditional and Sport routes and be able to set up safe top-ropes. Although abseiling and ascending the ropes are important these skills should not over emphasized.

Knots

- Rethreaded Figure 8, Figure 8 on the bite, clove hitch, double fisherman's knot, Munter-hitch, prusik knots, and alpine butterfly

Equipment

- Identification of semi-static and dynamic ropes and their uses, certification symbols, breaking strengths of ropes and accessory cords.
- Understand the differences and uses of Single and Double ropes in leading and in abseiling.
- A basic understanding of Fall Factors and how to calculate. Understanding of the breaking strain of ropes and other equipment.
- Use of plaquettes (reverso) in both modes.

Belay techniques

- Demonstrate the use of various belay plates, Figure 8 devices and auto-locking belays.
- Show good and safe techniques.

Artificial (bolted) anchor points

- Show how to clip into bolted anchors and how to recognize sub standard or weakened bolts.
- Show what a proper stainless steel bolt and hanger looks like before insertion.

Traditional equipment

- Demonstrate the use of cams, nuts and hexes.
- The uses and means of placing them.

Group supervision

- Learners to be shown how to manage groups of beginners.
- How to use methods to safeguard beginner climbers/belayers in bottom rope situations.

Top roping

- Set up equalised anchors and belay from the top of a cliff

Bottom roping

- Set up equalised anchors at the top of a cliff and belay a climber from below.

Traditional climbs

- Climb Traditional single pitch climbs of at least grade 10 during the course.
- The learner must aim to be proficient at leading grade 14 routes before assessment.
- During the course the learner should get to lead at least 3 single pitch routes.

Sport climbs

- Climb Sport single pitch climbs of at least grade 14 during the course.
- The learner must aim to be proficient at leading grade 16 sport routes before assessment.
- During the course the learner should get to lead at least 3 single pitch routes.

Threading anchors

- Learner must be taught to thread lower off anchors on a sport route in such a way that they are never unattached to the safety system.

Re-leasable abseils

- Set up a releasable abseil using Munter-hitches for belays.
- Abseil and safety ropes should be separate belay systems.
- Operate system with a stuck abseiler.

Retrievable abseils

- Set up and use a simple retrievable abseil.

Ascending the rope

- Show at least 2 prusik knots and ascend the rope using just this and a few karabiners.
- Change over to abseil while on the rope and then stop and change back to ascent.
- Also show how to back up a prusik ascent using a clove-hitch or similar method.

Hauling systems

- Demonstrate and use a 3:1 stand alone system and how this system can be incorporated into a climbers belay system at the top of a climb.

Local rescue structures

- Local mountain rescue structures and phone numbers.

The Award does not cover:

- The skills needed to approach and retreat from mountain crags
- Access to any location where escape is not easily possible from the top and the bottom of the abseil site
- Multiple abseils or abseils that involve intermediate stances

Prior to assessment:

- Have attended the Single Pitch Supervisor Award Course
- At least 5 sessions of supervising groups must be recorded
- Have lead 20 named Traditional climbs
- Have lead 20 named Sport climbs
- Be in possession of a valid First Aid certificate

Exception clause:

- The full course does not have to be attended if the candidate can show suitable prior experience recorded in a logbook. This must include at least 10 sessions of supervising of beginners, and the ability to personally abseil and use releasable abseils and ascend a rope using prusiks. At least 30 single pitch Traditional climbs and 30 Sport must have been lead.
- If the candidate shows appropriate prior leaning an assessment may take place straight after the course. This should only be done after due consideration with the assessor making sure that the candidate will be safe and skilled and able to carry out the task properly in the future. The candidate must be able to complete all of the tasks listed under assessment.

Assessment:

- Use the standard MDT Single Pitch Supervisor theory test (75% pass mark)
- The assessment should take place with the candidate managing a group of at least 2 people who are preferably beginners
- Candidate must lead a Traditional single pitch climb on-sight of at least grade 14
- Candidate must lead a Sport climb on-sight of at least grade 16 and safely thread the top anchors and lower-off
- Candidate must be asked to set up a personal retrievable abseil and abseil down with a prusik safety
- Candidate must set up a releasable abseil and send beginners down using a safety back up rope

- Candidates to carry out good belay technique and communicate clearly with the abseilers.
- Beginner abseilers must be well supervised at the top and bottom of the cliff and wear helmets at all times
- Candidate must operate the releasable system with a stuck abseiler
- Candidate must haul a stuck abseiler up using a 3:1
- Candidate must ascend and then change to descent on the fixed rope
- This assessment can be integrated and should seek to identify if the candidate can safely manage a group of climbers in a top and bottom rope situation and to second Traditional and Sport climbs within the confines of the award
- Candidates may be coached on non safety skills
- Candidates may not make any life threatening mistakes causing the assessor to step in.
- The instructor who presented the course may also assess the candidate

The Award does not cover:

- The skills needed to approach and retreat from mountain crags
- Multi-pitch rock climbing and it's supervision
- Access to any location where escape is not easily possible from the top and the bottom of a climb
- Releasable abseils

Mountain Leader Award

The Mountain Leader Award is an award to promote the safe enjoyment of the hills and mountains. The scheme provides training and assessment in the technical and group management skills required by those who wish to lead groups in the mountains, hills and wilderness of southern Africa. It integrates experience, training and assessment in a variety of testing conditions in mountainous country.

Duration: 4 days

Assessment: 2 day

The course covers:

- Navigation on trails
- Basic off-trail navigation
- Weather prediction
- Safety on steep ground
- River crossings
- Group leadership
- Camp craft and hygiene
- Emergency procedures
- Mountain rescue structures

International Mountain Leader Award

The International Mountain Leader Award provides comprehensive training and assessment for individuals who aspire to work as leaders in southern Africa and further afield. It integrates training, experience and assessment in a variety of realistic situations.

The Award provides training and assessment in the skills required for leading and educating groups worldwide in summer conditions and also on easy snow covered, rolling, Nordic type terrain in the “middle mountains” in winter conditions. The scheme does not involve the techniques and equipment of alpinism or glacial travel.

Duration: 6 days

Assessment: 4 days

- Advanced navigation on and off trail
- Weather prediction and understanding
- Safety on steep ground including the use of a rope
- River crossings with and without the use of a rope
- Movement over snow covered terrain
- Mountain hazards and their avoidance
- Group leadership
- Camp craft and hygiene
- Emergency procedures
- Mountain rescue structures
- Instructor Awards

The Instructors Awards provides comprehensive training and assessment for individuals working as instructors privately or at mountaineering centres. The awards are primarily concerned with candidates ability to run MDT courses and assessments in-line with the organisations requirements. Candidates are required to have attained certain previous MDT awards before attending an instructor course.

Mountain Walking Instructor

Requirements prior to course:

- Must hold the IML award prior to attending the course.

Duration of course: 3 days

Assessment: 2 days

The objective of this course is two fold:

- To teach the learner about the contents of the other mountain leader (hiking) courses so that they may effectively instruct these courses
- To teach the learner how to practically run these courses and assessments. Much of this course takes place in a classroom situation

Syllabus of the ML award - Explain the syllabus and objectives

Syllabus of the IML award - Explain the syllabus and objectives

Syllabus of the Hiking Leader course - Explain the syllabus and objectives

Methods of teaching navigation

- Different ways of taking a compass bearing.
- How to run a navigation exercise in good and bad visibility.
- How to teach about maps
- How to teach about geography and land features.

MDT administration

- How the MDT administration and paper trail works
- Assessment process and standards of MDT Awards
- How to run a practical assessment and standard tests

Prior to assessment:

- Must have completed the Mountain Walking Instructor Course
- Have acted as an assistant instructor or assessor on at least 5 prior occasions during MDT mountain walking courses

Assessment for the Mountain Walking Instructor

- Be in possession of a valid First Aid certificate
- Write the standard MDT MWI test (75% pass)
- Be observed running a full Basic Hiking Course
- Be observed running an IML course
- Be examined on any aspect of the mountain leader syllabi

Clauses

- The candidate may not be assessed in the practical by the same instructor who presented the course, i.e. the instructor of the course may only check the logbook and written test.
- Two assessors must examine the candidates levels of skill and experience
- Due to assessors being geographically distant at times the assessors may take several sessions to examine the candidate and in different locations
- Both assessors must find the candidate competent
- The assessors must write a report on how the candidate was found competent and any weaknesses they may have found. A copy of this report must be lodged with the MDT administrator.

Rock Climbing Instructor

The program provides training and assessment in the skills required to teach, and assess rock climbing and to conduct all courses and assessments of the MDT. This is the highest level of rock climbing and candidates are expected to have wide range of skills and knowledge. The core to this is the ability to be a highly skilled rock climber.

Requirements prior to course:

- Must hold the SPSA and ASA and ML awards and have attended the RCL recreational course or can show similar experience
- Must have lead or co-lead 50 named multi-pitch climbs
- Must have lead 100 Sport pitches
- Must have climbed in at least 10 different venues in southern Africa
- Must be able to leadership grade 17 Traditional climbs
- Must be able to lead grade 20 Sport climbs
- Must have climbed had at least 3 routes of grade A2

Duration of course: 3 days

Assessment: 2 days

The objective of this course is two fold

- To teach the learner about the contents of the other MDT rock and abseiling courses and awards so that they may effectively instruct these courses
- To teach the learner how to practically run these courses and assessments. A small proportion of this course may take place in the classroom.

The learner must also hold the Mountain Leader Award so that they can safely approach and retreat from mountain crag areas.

Syllabus of the Beginner rock climber course - Practically teach what and how the award should be presented.

Syllabus of the ASA award - Practically teach what and how the award should be presented.

Syllabus of the Walking Climbing Supervisor - Practically teach what and how the award should be presented.

Syllabus of the Rock climbing Leader Course - Practically teach what and how the award should be presented.

Syllabus of the Single Pitch Supervisor Award - Practically teach what and how the award should be presented.

Teaching methods of other aspects of the syllabi

- How to safe guard beginner top rope belay/climber situations
- How to teach lead climbing
- MDT administration
- How the MDT administration and paper trail works

- Assessment process and standards of MDT Awards
- How to run a practical assessment and standard written tests.

Assessment for the Rock climbing Instructor

- Be in possession of a valid First Aid certificate
- Write the standard MDT RCI test. 75% pass mark
- Be observed running a full any one recreational course
- Be observed running any one Leadership course
- Be examined on any aspect of the rock climbing award or syllabi

Clauses

- The candidate may not be assessed in the practical by the same instructor who presented the course, i.e. the instructor of the course may only check the logbook and written test
- Two assessors must examine the candidate's levels of skill and experience
- Due to assessors being geographically distant at times, the assessors may take several sessions to examine the candidate and in different locations.
- Both assessors must find the candidate competent.
- The assessors must write a report on how the candidate was found competent and any weaknesses they may have found. A copy of this report must be lodged with the MDT administrator.

Mountaineering Instructor Certificate

The program provides training and assessment in the skills required to teach, and assess general mountaineering, mountain hiking, mountain leadership and rock climbing and to conduct all courses and assessments of the MDT. It is a culmination of the both mountain walking skills and of rock, snow and ice climbing. This is the highest level and candidates are expected to have wide range of skills and knowledge. The core to this is the ability to be a highly skilled mountaineer on both rock, snow and ice. Experience outside the borders of South Africa is highly recommended.

Requirements prior to course:

- Hold a valid First aid certificate
- Must hold at least the IML and RCI awards
- Must have attended the RCL course
- Must have attended the Beginner snow climbing course
- Must have attended the Beginner ice climbing course
- Must have lead or co-lead 60 named multi-pitch climbs
- Must have lead 150 Sport pitches
- Must have climbed in at least 10 different venues in southern Africa
- Must have climbed at least 20 major mountain routes (these may be included in the 60 multi pitch climbs)
- Must be able to lead grade 17 Traditional climbs
- Must be able to lead grade 20 Sport climbs
- Must be have climbed at least 15 winter routes on snow or ice, or mixed
- Must be able lead grade WI 4 water ice routes
- Must have climbed at least 3 routes of grade A2
- Must be able to present evidence of experience of working in a technical mountain rescue capacity

Duration of course: 4 days

Assessment: 3 days

- Must be in possession of a valid First Aid certificate
- Write the standard MDT MIA test (75% pass mark)
- Be examined on any aspect of the rock climbing award or syllabi
- The candidate is to be assessed on teaching a least 2 courses which they have not yet been observed on during their other awards
- The candidate must lead or co-lead a major technical mountain route as part of the assessment

- The candidate must lead a Traditional pitch of climbing at grade 17 or above and of grade 20 Sport climb of grade 20 or above

Clauses

- The candidate may not be assessed in the practical by the same instructor who presented the course, i.e. the instructor of the course may only check the logbook and written test
- Two assessors must examine the candidates levels of skill and experience
- Due to assessors being geographically distant at times, the assessors may take several sessions to examine the candidate and in different locations.
- Both assessors must not only find the candidate competent but also to be a highly skilled and experienced mountaineer.
- The assessors must write a report on how the candidate was found competent and any weaknesses they may have found. A copy of this report must be lodged with the MDT administrator.