



# Mountaineering Scotland Risk Assessment

## Winter Hill Walking/Mountaineering Activities for Clubs

HAZARD	RISK	AT RISK Club Member (CM) Public (P)	PROBABILITY Low (L) Appreciable (A) High (H)	LEVEL Minor (M) Serious (S) Fatal (F)	MANAGEMENT	OK/AMEND
Lack of communication	Delay in response to an emergency	CM P	L	MSF	<p>Ensure that all club members carry a mobile phone and have pre-registered their phone with the emergency SMS texting service.</p> <p>When planning club trips in remote areas where mobile reception is poor/non-existent ensure group carries a Personal Locator Beacon or SPOT device.</p>	
Over reliance on modern technology for navigation	Malfunction of modern technology	CM	A	MSF	<p>Ensure that all club members understand that GPS/Phones/altimeters are useful tools for navigation; but should always be underpinned with traditional map &amp; compass skills.</p>	
Weather	<p>Hypothermia and/or exhaustion, particularly if delayed/lost due to poor weather including whiteouts, blizzards, very strong winds.</p> <p>Cold injuries (frost nip, frostbite) in bad weather.</p> <p>Sun burn.</p> <p>Snow blindness.</p> <p>Injury due to lightning strike.</p> <p>Unexpected change in weather leading to a change in avalanche hazard or snow/ice conditions, etc.</p> <p>See relevant sections below.</p>	CM	<p>A</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p>	<p>MSF</p> <p>MS</p> <p>MS</p> <p>MS</p> <p>MSF</p>	<p>Specialist mountain weather forecasts consulted where available. Local weather reports obtained where available.</p> <p>PPE appropriate to weather conditions carried by all club members.</p> <p>Encouraging all party members to be receptive changes in the weather throughout their day on the hill.</p> <p>Refer to other sections for specific hazards which are affected by weather e.g. avalanche.</p>	
Steep broken terrain. Slippery rock (inc. verglas), snow on grass, muddy, icy or loose paths. Steep snow and ice slopes. Cornices.	<p>Possibility of injury due to slips, stumbles or falls in ascent/descent (inc. tripping over crampons).</p> <p>Also risk of injury due to stone fall and/or icelfall, either natural or caused by club members or other mountain users.</p> <p>Avalanche risk (see section below)</p>	CM p	<p>A</p> <p>L/A</p>	<p>MSF</p> <p>MSF</p>	<p>Ensure route chosen is appropriate to club member's abilities and prevailing conditions. Club member should be encouraged to attend an MS winter skills course and/or in house training from more experienced club members. Ensure that the element of risk is understood and accepted by all.</p> <p>Refer to weather and avalanche section.</p>	



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Water hazards such as burns, rivers, snow bridges and marshy ground	Burns/rivers in spate may result in lengthy detours leading to risk of exhaustion and hypothermia in club members. Possibility of slipping or falling into water resulting in immersion hypothermia and increased risk of cold injuries. Risk of drowning. Physical trauma.	CM	L  L  L L	MSF  MSF	Specialist mountain weather forecasts consulted where available. Local weather reports obtained where available. Club members take into account implications of burns/rivers in spate on route choice. Club members should be encouraged to attend an MS winter mountain safety lecture.	
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HAZARD	RISK	AT RISK Students (S) Instructors (I) Public (P)	PROBABILITY Low (L) Appreciable (A) High (H)	LEVEL Minor (M) Serious (S) Fatal (F)	MANAGEMENT	OK/AMEND
Avalanche All types	Risk of burial/trauma injuries; being swept over broken ground and resulting injuries. Avalanches being triggered by other walkers/mountaineers/climbers or environmental influences. Awareness of 'terrain traps'	CM  P	Variable	MSF  MSF	Specialist mountain weather and avalanche forecasts consulted as appropriate. Local weather forecasts obtained where available. SAIS referred to in the planning stage of a clubs day out on the hill. Club members encouraged to attend an MS avalanche training course and/or gain experience and expertise from more experienced club members.	