



## Mountaineering Scotland Risk Assessment Winter Hill Walking Activities

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
Lack of communication in the event of an emergency	Delay in rescue	SI	L	MSF	Instructor MUST carry a mobile phone & the phone must be registered for the Emergency SMS texting service. For those staff in full time MS employment (MSA & St John MSI) a Personal Locator Beacon should be carried.	
Over-reliance on modern technology for the purpose of navigation	Malfunction of modern technology	SI	H	MSF	All instructors employed on the mountain safety programme should understand that modern technology (GPS/phone/altimeter) are useful tools of the trade but should always be underpinned with traditional map & compass skills. This philosophy should also be taught to all students attending MS courses.	
Weather	Hypothermia and/or exhaustion, particularly if delayed/lost due to poor weather including whiteouts, blizzards, very strong winds. Cold injuries (frost nip, frostbite) in bad weather. Sun burn. Snow blindness. Injury due to lightning strike. Changes in forecast weather leading to change in avalanche hazard; snow/ice conditions, etc. <i>See relevant sections below.</i>	S, I	A  L L L	MSF  MS MS MSF	Specialist mountain weather forecasts consulted where available. Local weather reports obtained where available. PPE appropriate to weather conditions carried by students and instructors. Instructors trained, experienced, qualified & insured in navigation, weather signs and appropriate first aid.  <i>Refer to other sections for specific hazards which are affected by weather e.g. avalanche.</i>	
Steep broken terrain. Slippery rock (inc. verglas), snow on grass, muddy, icy or loose paths. Steep snow and ice slopes. Cornices.	Possibility of injury due to slips, stumbles or falls in ascent/descent (inc. tripping over crampons). Also risk of injury due to stone fall and/or icefall, either natural or caused by participants or other walkers. <i>Avalanche risk (see section below)</i>	S I p	A  L/A	MSF  MSF	Route chosen is appropriate to students' abilities and prevailing conditions. Students are suitably trained in basic defensive winter skills. Students are supervised as appropriate to their abilities and prevailing conditions. Appropriate PPE is used. Instructors are suitably trained & experienced. The element of risk is understood and accepted by all. <i>Refer to weather and avalanche section.</i>	
Water hazards such as burns, rivers, snow bridges and	Burns/rivers in spate may result in lengthy detours leading to risk of exhaustion and hypothermia in students.	S I	L	MSF MSF	Specialist mountain weather forecasts consulted where available. Local weather reports obtained where available. Instructors take into account implications of burns/rivers in spate on route choice; are conversant	



# Mountaineering Scotland

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marshy ground	Possibility of slipping or falling into water resulting in immersion hypothermia and increased risk of cold injuries. Risk of drowning. Physical trauma.		L  L L		with weather signs; are trained and experience in river crossing techniques and procedures. Students receive appropriate instruction and supervision in river crossing techniques	
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Avalanche All types	Risk of burial/trauma injuries; being swept over broken ground and resulting injuries. Avalanches being triggered by students, instructor, other walkers or environmental influences.	S I P	Variable	MSF  MSF	Specialist mountain weather and avalanche forecasts consulted as appropriate. Local weather forecasts obtained where available. Instructors suitably trained, experienced, qualified & insured in avalanche prediction using a variety of information sources and techniques; safe travel methods; search and rescue techniques.	