SCOTTISH STUDENTS' WINTER SKILLS COURSE

COURSE DATES

Friday 15th – Sunday 17th January 2027

COURSE AIM

The course will cover the basic skills required for venturing into the UK mountains under winter conditions. The aim is to prepare you to be able to climb the Munros under winter conditions or find your way safely to and from more technical climbs. The course is NOT a climbing course and NO ropework will be covered. Also included will be practical and theory sessions to help you make sound judgements about the avalanche hazard, weather, and equipment needed (as well as the skills to use it effectively). We cannot guarantee sufficient snow to cover all aspects that we would like to, but we will offer relevant training and you are guaranteed some individual tuition. The courses are only open to those 18 years of age and older.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The programme is flexible with your instructor basing the two days around the topics below, taking into account individual needs and aims, weather etc.

Technical sessions will include the use of an ice axe for walking, cutting steps, and self-arrest; use of crampons in ascent/descent; emergency shelters may also be covered.

Time will also be given to the equally important skills of avalanche awareness, route choice and winter navigation. There is **no** overnight snowholing expedition.

Evening sessions will include avalanche awareness and navigation talks.

MAPS

We will be operating in the Northern Cairngorms, south from Glenmore Lodge to Ben MacDui, west to the Lairig Ghru and east to Strath Nethy. Bring an **O.S. map sheet 36** 1:50,000 scale (or an O.S. or Harvey 1:25,000 map). Alternatively, if you have access to digital mapping you may be able to printout maps of these areas). Bring a map case - having a waterproof map or map case is essential.

Maps, a compass (Silva type 4 recommended) and batteries can be purchased from the Lodge shop.

EQUIPMENT

Please bring your own equipment where possible, but if required Glenmore Lodge can supply all equipment **excluding** basic warm clothing, hats and gloves, compass, map, headtorch, ski goggles and thermos. We would expect to supply ice axe, winter boots, crampons, gaiters, and waterproofs if required. An equipment list accompanies this information sheet.

If you have your own equipment e.g. good winter mountain boots, crampons, ice axe, waterproofs, rucksack etc. please feel free to bring them along. If not, we can easily kit you out from the stores. You will be walking off paths and at times on hard snow slopes - soft leather boots will not be appropriate. As a guide - Winter boots, not normal summer boots. B1, B2 or B3 rated winter mountaineering boots.

These need to be compatible with your crampons.
Check out the following links for more details on which boots are suitable for our winter courses:
www.mountaineering.scot/activities/mountaineering/winter-mountaineering/getting-started/boots

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6E8Kq1JQ-vw

Finally, **ski goggles** are a particularly useful item in the hills in winter - however we **do not supply them**.

What you do need to bring is your own basic hill clothing e.g. hat, **at least 2 pairs** of substantial winter gloves or mitts, fleece, warm mountain trousers, thermos etc. Although we provide you with one towel for the weekend, you may like to bring an extra, particularly if you intend to use our small pool, there is also a climbing wall.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Friday - Arrival Day

You may arrive anytime on Friday evening, however rooms are usually available from 1500hrs.

No dinner meal is provided on the first evening. There are alternative places to eat in and around Aviemore before arriving at Glenmore Lodge.

Equipment is available from the stores from 1800 – 2100hrs and it will save time during the following morning if you draw any items you need on the Friday evening.

Saturday - First full day of training

Breakfast is from 0730 - 0815hrs. The stores will be open again at 0830hrs on the Saturday morning and there will be a welcome address from Glenmore Lodge and Mountaineering Scotland at 0900hrs in the Lecture Theatre.

Sunday - Second full day of training (last course day)

The course will end around 1600hrs and rooms should be vacated by 0900hrs. Tea and cake is available from 1630hrs onwards. There is no evening meal on the Sunday night.

Packed lunches are issued both days; ensure you bring a thermos flask and / or water bottle.

INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that you arrange adequate insurance cover before engaging in any sporting activity whilst travelling or on holiday. You should note that many travel insurance policies exclude cover for certain sporting activities, so you should carefully check the terms of any proposed insurance policy to ensure that it meets your requirements.

Climbing Wall and Pool

There is a climbing wall on site that will be accessible for use, but paperwork needs to be completed in advance. See following link Climbing Wall | Glenmore Lodge You will need to bring your own harnesses and shoes, plus sign in and out at reception. There is also a very small pool which can be used. There needs to be a minimum of 2 people at a time for safety reasons, as there is no lifeguard monitoring. Please enquire at reception.