



Qualifications - a brief explanation of our awards

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In the U.K. qualifications are used, alongside relevant experience to demonstrate that somebody is competent at an activity within the teaching / abseiling / climbing / mountaineering and industrial rope access industries. There is a whole array of awards, and it can be a little confusing, so here is a summary of the awards and the Professional Associations -

Professional Associations

There are different professional associations for holders of different awards.

1. **The Mountain Training Association (MTA)** (<http://www.mountain-training.org/associations/mountain-training-association>) is for holders of the following awards - Climbing Wall Award, Climbing Wall Leader Award, Single Pitch Award (SPA), Foundation or Development Coach Award, Lowland Leader, Hill and Moorland Leader, Mountain Leader (ML) and the Winter Mountain Leader (WML).
2. **Association of Mountaineering Instructors (AMI)** (<http://www.mountain-training.org/associations/ami>) is for holders of the following awards - Mountaineering Instructor Award (MIA) and the Mountaineering Instructor Certificate (MIC).
3. **British Association of International Mountain Leaders (BAIML)** (<http://www.baiml.org>) is for holders of the International Mountain Leader (IML) qualification.
4. **Industrial Rope Access Trade Association (IRATA)** (<http://www.irata.org>) is for IRATA Technicians.

Awards / Qualifications explained, divided into their different categories -

Mountain Training

Climbing Wall Award (CWA) - The Climbing Wall Award is for climbers who are in a position of responsibility when supervising climbing activities on indoor or outdoor climbing walls. They are not qualified to instruct an abseil activity.

Climbing Wall Leader Award (CWLA) - This is a higher award than the CWA. This award has been designed for those who wish to teach lead climbing skills on artificial climbing walls. They are not qualified to instruct an abseil activity.

Single Pitch Award (SPA) - The Single Pitch Award scheme is for those who are in a position of responsibility during single pitch rock climbing activities. This is the minimum qualification required to work on an abseil activity - although their skills and qualification are limited.

Foundation or Development Coach Award - These awards are designed to enable coaches to be more effective in coaching the fundamental movement skills of climbing, and the development of climbers. The Development Coach could work on an abseil activity - although their skills and qualification are limited.

Lowland Leader (LL) - For leaders taking groups on day walks in lowland countryside and woodland in summer conditions. They are not qualified to instruct an abseil activity.

Hill and Moorland Leader (HML) - This is a higher award than the LL. For leaders operating in terrain that is generally more remote than that used by Lowland Leaders and not as steep or rocky as ground covered by Mountain Leaders. They are not qualified to instruct an abseil activity.

Mountain Leader (ML) - This is a higher award than the HML. This award is for people who want to lead groups in the remote hills and mountains of the UK and Ireland. They are not qualified to instruct an abseil activity.

Winter Mountain Leader (WML) - This is a higher award than the ML. This award is for leaders taking their groups of hill walkers, into winter conditions, in the UK. They are not qualified to instruct an abseil activity.

Mountaineering Instructor Award (MIA) - This is a higher award than the SPA or the ML. The Mountaineering Instructor Award enables holders to instruct abseiling, mountaineering, rock climbing and scrambling. The Mountaineering Instructor Award is an extensively used professional award. This is a very high level of qualification with regards to abseiling instruction, climbing and complex rope-work. The holder is able to set up complex abseils with multiple anchors. If an abseil rescue was required, then the MIA holder is trained and assessed for all types of rescue.

Mountaineering Instructor Certificate (MIC) - This is a higher award than the MIA and the WML. This is the highest Mountaineering qualification for use in the UK. It builds on the skills acquired in both the Mountaineering Instructor Award (MIA) and Winter Mountain Leader (WML) awards. This is the highest possible mountaineering/abseil instructor award in the UK. The MIC holder is sometimes the Technical Expert for multiple companies.

British Association of International Mountain Leaders

International Mountain Leader (IML) - This is a higher award than the ML. The qualification enables the holder to lead walking parties on high altitude treks and mountain expeditions. The qualification covers the competence, knowledge, skills and abilities needed for leading groups on any mountaineering activities where the techniques of alpinism are not required.

Industrial Rope Access Trade Association

Level 1 Technician (IRATA Level 1) - This is the first level of the IRATA scheme. This award holder would normally be working in the construction / drilling / trade industry rather than the commercial or leisure industries. However the experience, understanding and knowledge of the award holder enables them to efficiently set up multiple anchors for an abseil, off of a building or man made structure - of any size.

Teaching Awards

Qualified teacher status (QTS) is required in England and Wales to work as a teacher of children in state schools under local authority control, and in special education schools. A similar status exists under a different name in Scotland and Northern Ireland. QTS means that you have met the statutory requirements (The Teachers' Standards 2012) for teaching in the UK. You need QTS to be able to teach in maintained schools in the UK. A PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate of Education) is an additional academic qualification which usually includes QTS. The PGCE is a one or two year academic qualification you can achieve during your teacher training.

