

# POLAR QUALIFICATION

## Lead a Hike in Non-Technical Terrain

2020 Edition



**POLAR  
TOURISM**  
Guides Association

guiding guiding



### DEFINITIONS:

- Scope:** Outlines who the test is for.
- Element:** Outlines the overall **skill set** to be tested.
- Range:** The **specific skills** to be examined. An examination **may or may not** include all of the range items. It is at the discretion of the Assessor if the Assessee shows confidence and ease in other range items as to whether they examine them or not.

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### SCOPE:

Lead a Hike in Non-Technical Terrain is for field staff/guides who may be in charge of leading polar hikes in terrain that may include, dry glacial areas, outwash plains, beach and sub tidal zones, mountains and passes. Such hikes shall not require the use of a rope or other alpine equipment in order to safely manage them. Hikes may include snow or ice travel but only where a fall will not result in an uncontrollable slide. It may include areas where known and manageable crevasses are present. The PTGA believes this is **minimum** requirement for longer hikes outside a landing zone or field camp area.

### Prerequisites:

- Logged >20 group hikes (at least 5 must have been in the polar environment).
- Current First Aid Certificate.
- PQ Navigation Skills for Polar Operations.
- PQ Communications for Polar Operations.
- PQ Crevasse Awareness and Management.
- PQ Interpretation Skills for Polar Guides.

### CROSS CREDIT:

Any internationally recognized qualifications that include these components to the level of the Scope or higher. See Cross Credit Matrices.

## ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA:

### Element 1 – Plan & Prepare for a Hike

#### 1.1 Deliver a written plan for a hike (hike duration >2hours) that is suitable for polar tourism.

(This is a paper exercise for assessment purposes only. It is aimed at testing planning concepts.)

*Range:* Aims, objectives and purpose of the trip, estimated distances and times, emergency and alternative routes, risk/hazard identification and management strategies, any consent or access issues, weather information, intentions, communications and emergency procedures.

#### 1.2 Personally prepare for a hike.

*Range:* Suitable attire for the conditions, spare crucial clothing for self and clients, navigation device or strategy, knowledge of expected conditions on that particular route on that day, sunscreen, radio carried in a suitable manner, first aid kit suitable for the purpose and knowledge of client equipment and the ability to do basic repairs.

#### 1.3 Demonstrate strategies to collect relevant local information.

*Range:* Real-time weather information for a given area, snow and/or avalanche conditions, crack and crevasse status, tide conditions, wildlife risks or sensitivity issues.

#### 1.4 Brief clients on an intended hike (on a ship, beach or at a camp/base).

*Range:* Introduction, appropriate voice, language and body language, teaching/visual aids, demonstrations, learning moments, evaluation of learning, engaging clients in positive experience which encourages enthusiasm and interest.

### Element 2 – Lead & Safely Manage a Group in a Given Polar Environment

#### 2.1 Effective management of the group.

*Range:* Pacing, rest stops, disclosure and explanation of potential dangers, route selection with regards to geography and movement around wildlife, keeping the group together, a system for accounting for everyone, establishing rapport, use of a leadership style appropriate to the group and support staff accompanying, situational management of hazards and wildlife encounters.

#### 2.2 Efficient and confident personal movement in a range of different polar terrain.

*Range:* Slippery rocks, snow, glacial white ice, mud, talus, tussock, rocky and broken ground.

#### 2.3 Demonstrate the use of, and can describe the advantages and limitations of different methods of communication suitable for use on a polar environment hike.

*Range:* Radio, smartphone, GPS tracker, PLB, SAT phone, intentions form.

#### 2.4 Demonstrate knowledge and theory of emergency shelters available for a given hike.

*Range:* Suitable for surviving a night in adverse weather conditions (wind and rain), group shelter or Bothy Bag, snow cave, wind wall.

**2.5 Demonstrate and explain safe practices in and around polar waterways.**

*Range:* Alpine streams open or snow covered, glacial streams and gutters, outwash plains, undercut ice edges on coastline.

**2.6 Demonstrate knowledge of, and role model, accepted tour operator practices.**

*Range:* IAATO/AECO site guidelines, local area rules and laws including access issues and protocols, Leave No Trace.

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DATE	REVIEWERS
2016	Prepared by Graham Charles
3/12/2016	Graham Charles, <i>et al.</i>
16/10/2016	Graham Charles, <i>et al.</i>
1/4/2017	Graham Charles, Phil Wickens
8/5/2017	PTGA Board
10/10/2017	Graham Charles, Ewan Blyth
14/5/2018	Qualifications Review Meeting
20/5/2019	Qualifications Review Meeting
28/3/20	Qualifications Review Meeting