

## POLAR QUALIFICATION

# Lead a Polar Expedition

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 Polar Expedition is for experienced polar guides who may be in charge of leading multi-day expeditions (>14 days) in polar landscapes that may include, ice caps, glaciers and glacial neve areas, mountains and passes or on sea-ice. Skills, knowledge and experience with skiing and sled/pulk travel, extreme polar camping, weather forecasting, crevasse travel and rescue with sled/pulk, navigation and making route choices in potentially hazardous terrain are essential.

*Special Notes:* i The advanced first aid requirement for this PQ is any wilderness emergency care that is minimum 40 hour program.

ii This PQ does not test kite-skiing skills or the use of kites to assist travel.

iii Expeditions may involve snow or ice travel with skis, snow shoes or crampons.

### PREREQUISITES:

- >30 days guiding to the level of the Scope.
- >80 personal days operating in Scope terrain.
- Current Wilderness First Responder award or equivalent.
- Crevasse Travel and Crevasse Rescue qualification.
- Polar Guide or Senior Polar Guide status.
- Terrestrial Navigation Endorsement.

**CROSS CREDIT:** Logged experience and endorsement, currency in any recognised international award scheme that covers material relevant to this award (IPGA, IFMGA etc).

**METHOD:** Candidates will participate in an oral interview examination about an expedition location of their choice (as per the Scope) with two qualified guides who will examine knowledge in the following elements. This may be in real time or on conference call.

## **ELEMENTS & PERFORMANCE CRITERIA:**

### **Element 1 – Planning an expedition route.**

*Range:* Aims, objectives and purpose of the trip, estimated distances and times, emergency and alternative routes, risk/hazard identification and management strategies, any consent, environmental, legal or access issues, information or consultation strategies, seasonal factors, feasibility, time vs resource management, intentions, communications and emergency procedures, biosecurity mitigation, flight sharing to minimize emissions, dealing with logistics operators and permits.

### **Element 2 – Expedition equipment.**

#### **2.1 Candidate can discuss a range of issues regarding expedition equipment.**

*Range:* Appropriateness for route and conditions (sea ice, mountains, polar bears, extreme cold), equipment testing and knowledge, equipment repair capacity, knowledge of navigation equipment and strategies to navigate.

### **Element 3 – Expedition camping, food, cooking and sanitation.**

#### **3.1 Candidate can discuss campsite selection and construction issues.**

*Range:* Drift, crevasses, wind, aircraft, wildlife, safety management strategies with any of these, camp construction in a blizzard.

#### **3.2 Candidate can discuss food and cooking issues relevant to examination expedition.**

*Range:* Tent cooking strategies, containment and storage, energy requirements (in calories or kilojoules) per person for your proposed conditions/duration/workload/gender, fuel capacity/burn rate to produce food and water, risks of CO<sub>2</sub> poisoning and procedures to respond, daily food intake strategies while mobile.

#### **3.3 Candidate can discuss toileting and sanitation issues in extreme climates.**

*Range:* Relevant environmental protocols, burial, containment and carry, Leave No Trace.

## Element 4 – Expedition team and leadership.

### 4.1 Candidate can discuss strategies for pre-expedition participant information.

*Range:* Strategies and methods for evaluating participant capabilities, psychological capacity and emotional readiness for expedition, medical information and support role information, clothing and equipment check.

### 4.2 Candidate can discuss effective leadership skills and leadership strategies.

*Range:* Engaging clients in positive experience which encourages enthusiasm and interest, disclosure and explanation of potential dangers, appropriate voice, language and body language, teaching/visual aids, demonstrations, learning moments, evaluation of learning, strategies for keeping a group together in poor visibility, a system for accounting for people, establishing rapport, use of a leadership style appropriate to the group, situational management of hazards and wildlife encounters.

## Element 5 – Environmental Impact Assessment and strategies.

*Range:* EIA process for the given area, rubbish and waste management strategies for examination area, knowledge of international laws governing relevant areas, permitting requirements for examination area, protocols for towns, bases or communities en-route in examination area.

## Element 6 – Communications.

### 6.1 Can describe the advantages and limitations of different methods of communication suitable for examination expedition.

*Range:* Satellite telephone, tracking and/or emergency beacons, redundancy in communications.

### 6.2 Can discuss options for powering communication devices.

*Range:* Solar, wind, spare batteries.

## Element 7 – Emergency and contingency planning.

*Range:* Emergency plan, emergency numbers, support team liaison, insurance contacts, adequate medical kit, use and/or construction of three types of emergency shelter. Demonstrate knowledge of crisis management strategies and priorities on a longer journey.

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DATE:  
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REVIEWERS:  
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Qualifications Review Meeting