



The 2024 UIMLA Standard – website information

Motivation to Revise the UIMLA Standard

- The previous UIMLA Standard was 12 years old, and the competencies described in it were missing several important subjects that are relevant today and in the future. The new topics in the 2024 UIMLA Standard are:
 - Hazards in the vicinity of glaciers and in post-glacial terrain (part of section 3.1),
 - Use of digital mapping (part of section 3.2),
 - Safeguarding (part of Section 3.4),
 - Travel risk management, emergency planning and incident reporting (section 3.5),
 - Local culture (part of section 3.7),
 - Sustainability, environmental awareness and minimum impact (section 3.8),
 - Movement and safety on icy terrain (section 3.16).
- It has always been assumed by the Technical Commission that the previous Standard included leading at altitude “*A Mountain Leader is a professional ... with the technical skills and physical capabilities to lead and educate clients in the mountains throughout the world*”. This has now been specified clearly in the 2024 Standard. The IML must possess the knowledge for suitable acclimatisation, and recognition of symptoms and treatment of altitude sickness and acute mountain sickness (AMS) for client safety. Furthermore, there are many destinations around the world with trekking terrain above 2500m where the IML may lead.
- UIMLA has grown during the last decade to include a more diverse range of geographical areas and mountain ranges, for example, Chile, Japan, Nepal, and Norway. In fact, UIMLA has grown from 13 to 27 full members between 2012 and 2024.
- Many parts of the previous Standard are unclear. It was therefore necessary to reduce differences due to interpretation by National Associations and Providers so their training to IML is more similar and the competencies of the IML are comparable. Guidance notes have been added to ensure clarity and understanding.
- It was necessary to include in the 2024 Standard requirements for prior personal experience and recommendations for consolidation, and to specify the minimum length of assessment, to ensure that an IML represents the highest quality for the profession.
- There must be a general and mutual understanding among all UIMLA members that the purpose of the UIMLA Standard is to ensure that a UIMLA IML develops the skills required to lead in a diverse range of mountain environments and countries other than their own.

The Process to Revise the UIMLA Standard

In early 2022, UIMLA invited IMLs to join a working group with regard to revising the Standard. A first meeting was held online in June and face-to-face meetings and workshops were held in connection with the AGA in Croatia that November. Work continued slowly during 2023 but was kickstarted at the AGA in Germany in November 2023. Peter Chapman joined the Technical Commission to lead the revision of the Standard. The working group with IMLs from 8 nations

reconvened and produced a complete draft in time for a technical meeting of the UIMLA Assessors in April 2024. Following this a new draft was completed and sent to all delegates for a period of hearing from June to the end of August 2024. Constructive feedback was received from 18 National Associations. This resulted in many adjustments to the draft version for hearing. During October, final adjustments were made by Bill Bailey and Peter Chapman, including incorporating feedback from the IFMGA.

The draft 2024 Standard was presented for vote at the AGA in Skopje, North Macedonia on the 2nd of November 2024 and it was unanimously approved by the 27 UIMLA members.

Importantly, under the 2024 UIMLA Standard:

- the activity of the IML is walking (hiking and trekking).
- the activity of the IML does not include Alpinism, roped climbing or skiing.

Also, the 2024 Standard allows for a UIMLA IML to gain further qualifications and for a National Association to add skills in conjunction with or as an extension to the training (appendix 4.3). Any additional modules do not change the scope of the common minimum Standard.

The UIMLA Standard represents an International Qualification

The purpose of the UIMLA Standard is to ensure that a UIMLA IML develops the skills required to lead in a diverse range of mountain environments and countries other than their own.

- The UIMLA Standard enables IMLs to work worldwide, it does not override or interfere with national standards or laws, which remain in effect for work carried out within a country.
- The UIMLA Standard may include competences that are not required in your home nation

The UIMLA CPD Policy

The policy for Continuing Professional Development was also updated to align with the new Standard. The overall requirement is unchanged, but the list of relevant CPD topics has been expanded to include all aspects of the new Standard. There are also recommendations for frequency of CPD attendance and that all existing IMLs should complete CPD in the new topics in the 2024 Standard.

Thankyou!

The UIMLA Technical Commission and Executive Committee would once again like to thank all who have given their time and expertise to contribute to the work to produce a revised 2024 Standard and CPD Policy.