

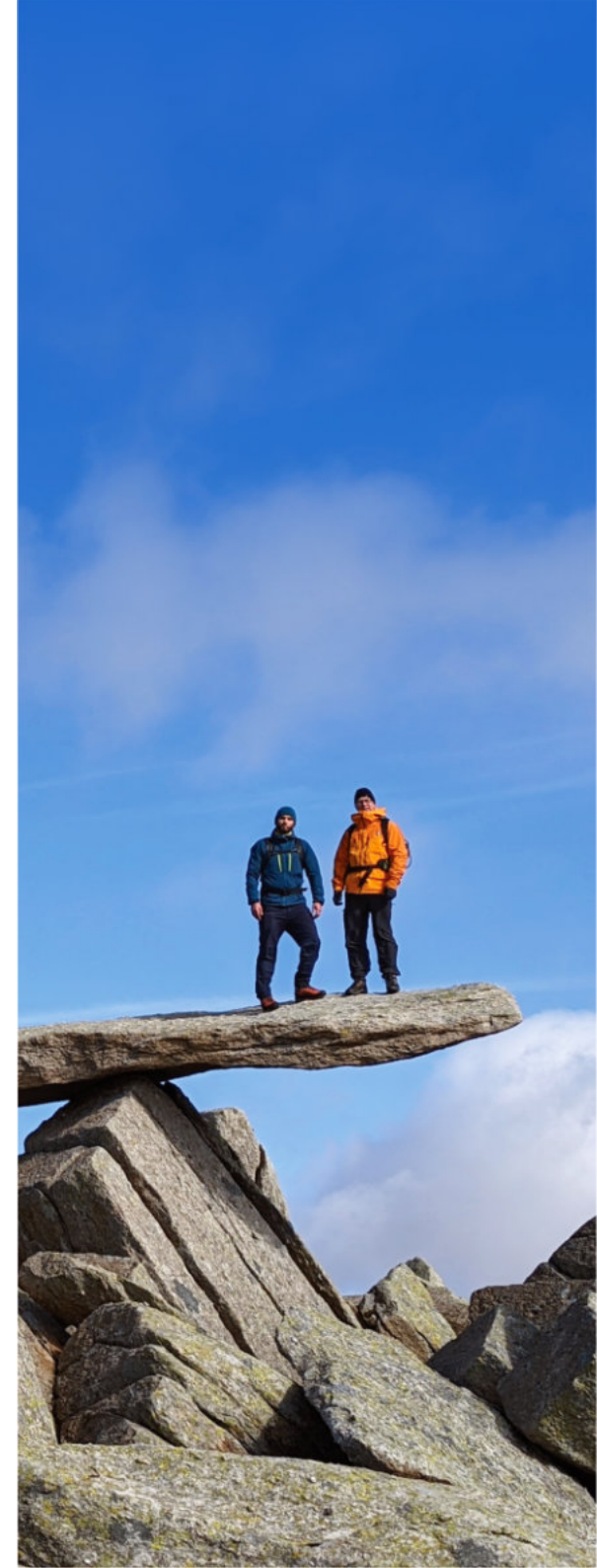
PLAS Y BRENIN

NATIONAL OUTDOOR CENTRE

Instructor Development Programme

FAST TRACK

V7 January 2026





Instructor Development Program (Fast Track)

Are you considering a career change? Do you crave more time outdoors and want to turn that passion into a career? Our Instructor Development Program could help you realise your potential and set you on a rewarding career path in the outdoor industry.

This intensive training course is designed from a blend of our extensive experience in delivering high-quality outdoor education, coupled with valuable feedback from years of running successful programs. The Instructor Development Program is not just an intensive training experience led by our highly experienced instructors; it's an opportunity to immerse yourself in the breathtaking landscape of Eryri (Snowdonia), the ultimate outdoor playground. You'll also be surrounded by a like-minded community, giving you a ready-made group to practice with during your free time on weekends. Once you arrive, we take care of everything so you can focus entirely on your development.

About PYB

Plas y Brenin is the National Outdoor Centre, operated by the Mountain Training Trust on behalf of Sport England. As a not-for-profit charity, our mission is to inspire and enable people of all abilities and experience levels to engage in outdoor activities.

Located in the heart of Eryri (Snowdonia) National Park and just a short drive from Anglesey, we are ideally positioned to access some of the UK's premier locations for mountaineering, climbing, paddling, and biking. Our prime location allows us to maximise your time here, ensuring that every day is spent making the most of these incredible natural environments.

The program is designed to provide you with top quality instruction in a flexible format. To ensure the highest quality of teaching, we maintain small group sizes, with instructor-to-student ratios ranging from a maximum of 1:6 to as low as 1:2 when needed.





Our beliefs

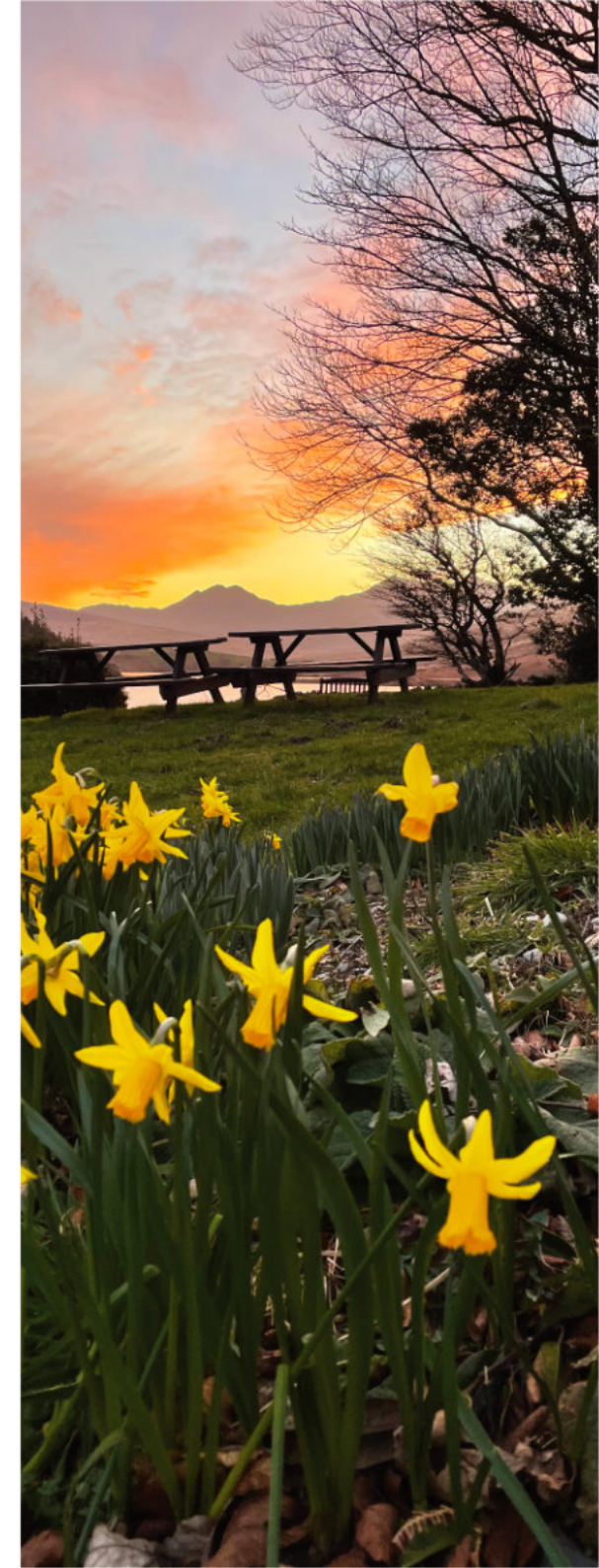
This programme is aimed at enabling you to build on your current experience and knowledge to help you be the best outdoor practitioner and instructor that you can be. This is not a programme that will force you through qualifications whether you're ready or not. We will give you the highest level of input and mentoring whilst including you in the planning and decision making to shape the program. When you feel ready, you can attend instructor training or assessment courses.

The Instructor Development Program is made up of three separate modules:

Module 1 – Mountaineering

Module 2 – Paddlesport/Mountainbike

Module 3 – Rock Climbing





Each module is four weeks long, you can choose to focus on just one, two or all three modules. During the four weeks you'll focus on personal skills and instructor training courses (if you're ready), you can then choose your assessment dates from our normal course offering up to a year from the end of your module. You could even do one module this year and a different one next year!

How does it work?

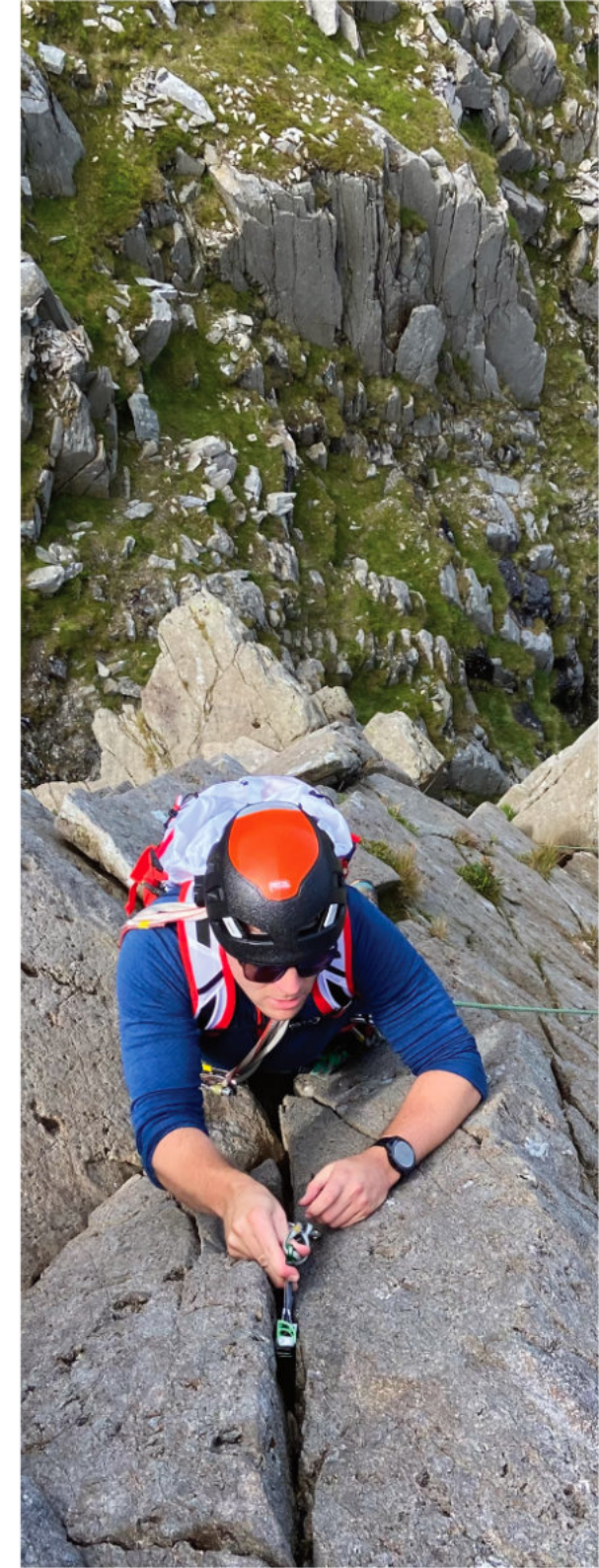
The whole programme is overseen by one person, James Bruton. This ensures continuity and that your personal learning needs are met. James conducts mid-course reviews to ensure you're getting everything you want and to act as a mentor.

Each module then has its own lead. Their job is to create the best, and most progressive programme possible, based on the team's aspirations, the weather, and conditions. Additional staff will then work alongside, and under their guidance, again ensuring a personalised and progressive approach.

All National Governing Body (NGB) courses follow the same format, attendance on a training course, followed by a consolidation period, then an assessment course.

PYB credit system

At PYB we are invested in assisting you to be the best outdoor practitioner that you can be. Because of this, each module focuses on training you to the highest standard without the pressure of going for either NGB training courses or assessments before you are ready.





If you complete the relevant NGB training courses within the 4 weeks of module time and have the adequate log book experience, you will get enough credit days to return to PYB when you are ready to do your assessments at no extra cost.

If you did not complete the NGB training courses within the module time, you will get enough credit days to return and do the training course when you have enough log book experience at no extra cost. You can book on an assessment once you are ready, but you will have pay for this.

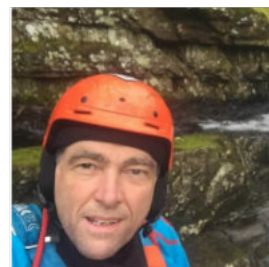
Your dedicated training team

Our instructional team are passionate outdoor enthusiasts. The instructors that will be working with you will have years of experience in their fields and hold the highest-level qualifications. They also work on the higher level NGB courses, training the trainers.

A standard morning staff meeting could see twenty staff discussing options for the day, with qualifications including the Winter Mountaineering & Climbing Instructor, top level British Canoeing coaches, British Mountain Guide and Mountain Bike Level Three tutors. Our instructors have been instrumental in developing these awards and regularly involved in the training and assessment of these courses.

This 'hive mind' is a major asset to our instruction; not only is everything sense checked to ensure high safety levels, but the combined experience and knowledge means we're never stuck for ideas or venues that will work on any given day.





Spike Green

Spike Green

Instructor development program lead

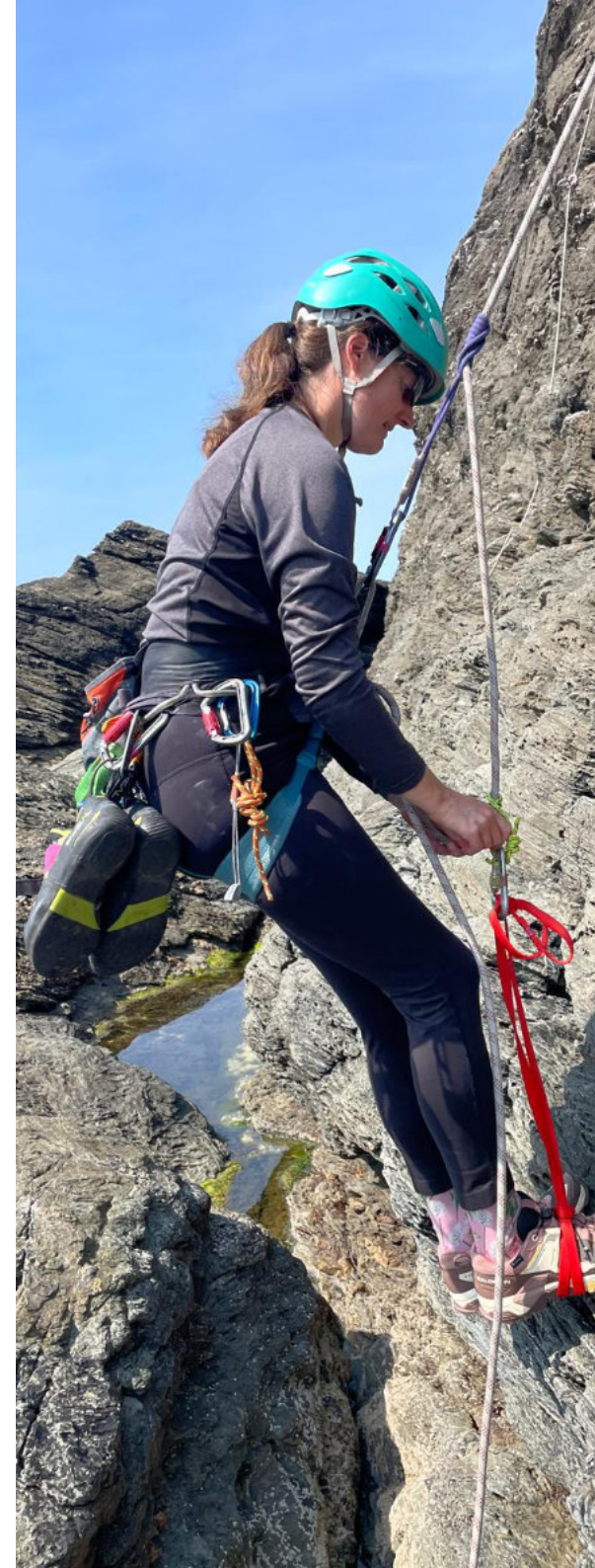
I work across all the instructional departments at Plas y Brenin. I've been working in the outdoor industry exclusively since 1982, so I've amassed quite a range of experience in most areas of our work.

Career Highlight.

Making the first descent of a river in a super remote area of the eastern Peruvian jungle. After a day or so (of a 12-day trip), I said to the head of the National Park in which we were travelling (who was also with us) that I felt it be a real privilege to be the first Westerner to have ever visited this area of the jungle. She said, "No, you misunderstand; WE are the first humans to have EVER been to this area!"

The local tribes have a detailed oral tradition which records where they have been. None of them had any collective memory of visiting the area we were in. Our footprints were the first; the wildlife had never seen humans before.

That was a truly remarkable experience.





Facilities at Plas y Brenin

Ensuite accommodation

When you get in from a hard day on the hill or water, it's essential to rest and recover. As part of the residential package, you'll have your own ensuite room and personal space to unwind. Your room will be cleaned once a week by our house keeping team and towels are provided. There are great drying rooms as well as washing and drying facilities for clothes.

Breakfast, packed lunch, cake and dinner 7 days a week

You will never go hungry at PYB! The residential package includes a full cooked breakfast or lighter alternative, packed lunch, cake when you get back (a PYB tradition!) and a 3 course meal in the evening. Our kitchen can cater for various dietary requirements including vegetarian and vegan options.

Climbing wall

We have our own climbing wall on site at PYB complete with bouldering area, roped climbing and an auto belay. You are welcome to use the climbing wall in your own time. You just need to register and sign in each time at reception.

Rolling pool

If you're on the paddlesport module, you're welcome to use the rolling pool in your own time following an induction with one of our paddlesport staff.

Kit stores

We have a comprehensive kit store for you to make the most of whilst you are here. We provide most of the equipment for the activities at PYB (More specific information in individual module information).



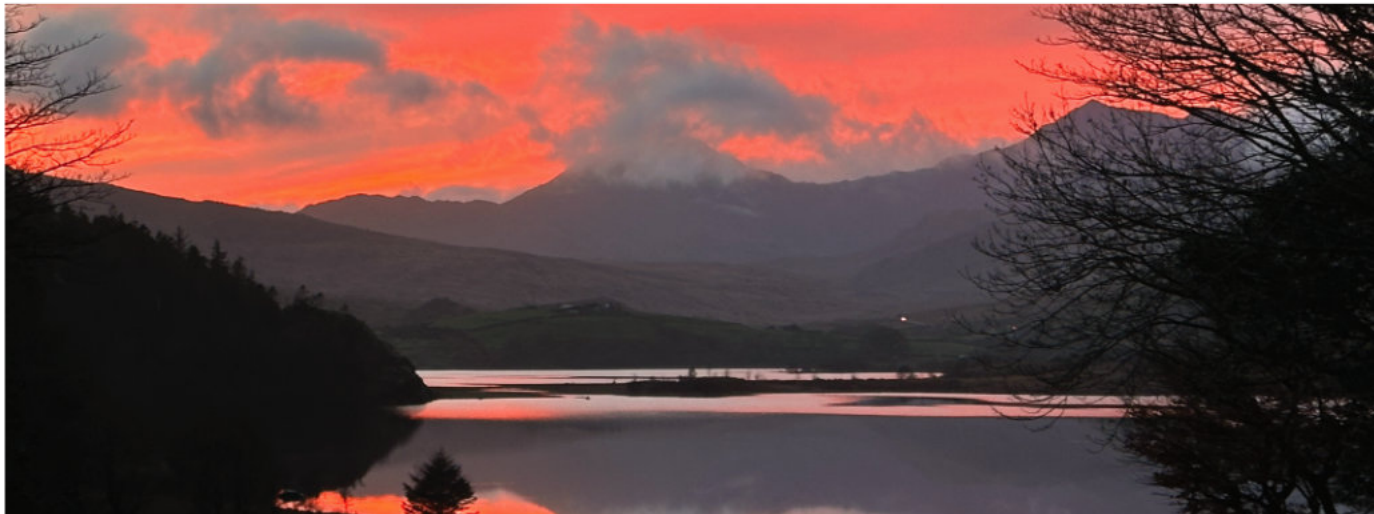


Bar

There is a licensed bar onsite! Whilst we are not encouraging you to drink lots when you're here (!) the bar area is often a great place to unwind, socialise and meet new people and network. The views of the Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) horseshoe never get old.

Drying rooms & storage

We also have great drying rooms to get your kit ready for the next day, washing and drying machines and bike storage. All transport to venues is covered during course time.





Fast Track Modules

Mountaineering Module

This module is pitched to give you all the skills and confidence to look after yourself on any British mountain, in any weather, in any season, at any time of day or night – in essence, a thoroughly well-rounded mountaineer! Though the weather in January is undoubtedly challenging at times, it's ideal practice for this month - as they say, train hard, fight easy!

We will help you to develop your personal skills as you work towards your Summer Mountain Leader training or assessment. Like any NGB award, you need to meet the minimum requirements to be able to attend the course. These are set out by the NGB and not Plas y Brenin. You do not need these pre requisites to attend the Fast Track course. Your journey towards these qualifications will vary in length depending on prior log book experience.

To get the most from the mountaineering module you should be fit enough to spend a day out in the hills covering up to 20 kilometres in the mountains with 1000 metres of ascent.





Scotland

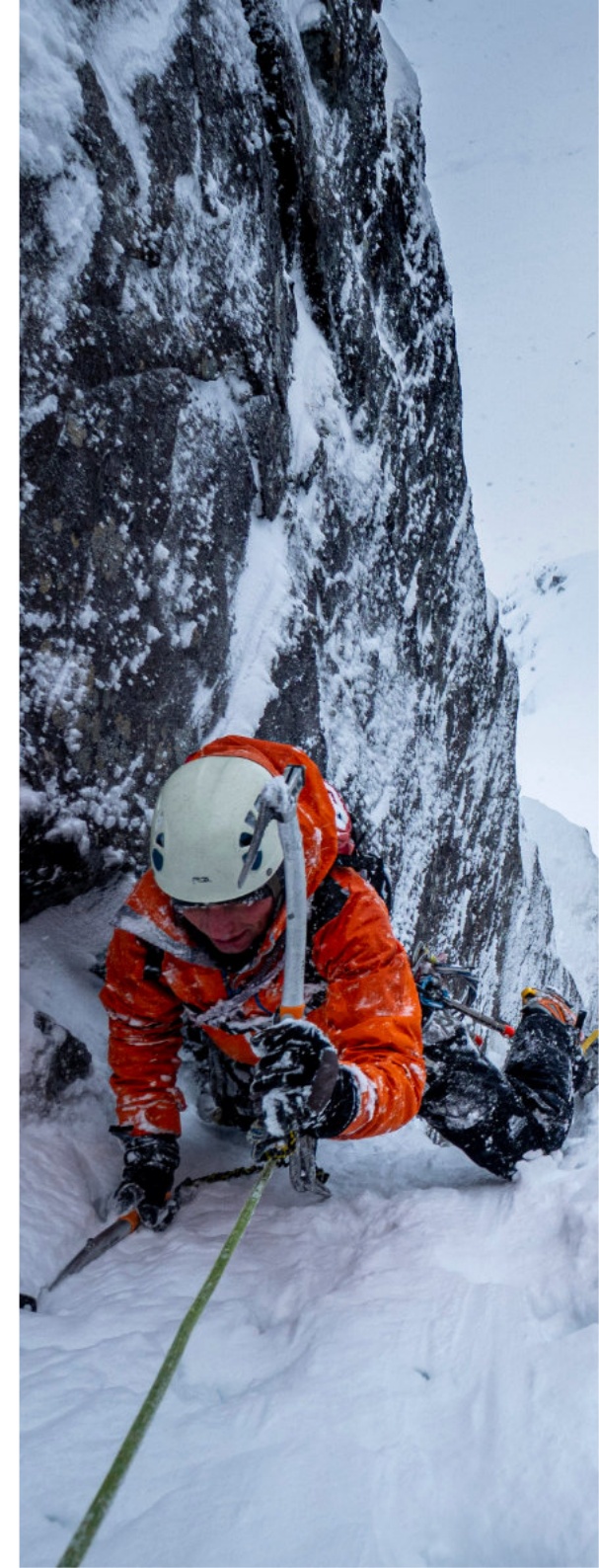
The mountaineering module will be at Plas y Brenin for 3 weeks, and at our base in Scotland for the final week to go winter mountaineering. [Alltshellach](#) hotel is well placed to make the most of some of the best mountain areas the West Highlands has to offer, located between Fort William and Glen Coe.

We'll aim to use ice axes and crampons to ascend some classic Munros, further develop your navigation in the snow, and give you all the skills you'll need to operate safely and independently in the winter environment. We will aim to ascend steeper ground and look at the use of ropes to safeguard the team.

After a month of tuition in the mountains you should feel prepared for anything that can be thrown at you! Depending on your experience, you may then choose to book a Mountain Leader Training or Assessment course from our public course dates, included within the price.

Pathway to mountain leader:

- Personal experience - gain a minimum of 20 Quality Mountain Days - QMD criteria [here](#)
- Register for the Mountain Leader and set a DLog profile [here](#)
- Be a member of the British Mountaineering Council [join here](#)
- Attend a first aid course [info here](#)
- Attend a Mountain Leader Training course, [info here](#)
- Consolidate your skills / have a minimum of 40 Quality Mountain Days (in total)
- Attend a Mountain Leader assessment - PYB assessments [here](#)





Kit that Plas y Brenin can provide from its comprehensive kit store whilst on the mountaineering module:

Walking boots
Waterproof jacket and trousers
Rucksacks
Helmets
Any other specialist equipment required on the course.

Crampons
Ropes
Ice axes

Kit you'll need to provide:

Thermal / warm layers
Warm hat
At least 2 pairs of gloves

1:25,000 map of Snowdonia (OL 17)
Personal first aid kit
Compass

Sample programme

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Introduction to the module/PYB Equipment for mountaineering Navigation fundamentals Personal movement in the mountains Weather/route planning	Introduction to scrambling Safety in steep ground The mountain environment Advanced scrambling	Mountain leader training OR Mountaineering skills	Scotland Winter skills Use of ice axe & crampons Winter navigation Winter scrambling





Paddlesport & Biking Module

The Paddlesport module is geared towards giving people the personal skills and knowledge to be safe on the water and work towards the Paddlesports Instructor and Paddlesports Leader. Like any NGB award, you need to meet the minimum requirements to be able to attend the course. These are set out by Paddle UK, not Plas y Brenin. You don't need these pre-requisites to attend the Fast Track course. Your journey towards these qualifications will vary in length depending on prior experience.

The Paddlesport Instructor course consists of training and assessment together, so you'll be able to complete this within the module time, if you meet the requirements.

The Paddlesports Leader consists of a separate training and assessment. The training is included withing the module time. You can then book onto an assessment when you're ready, after the module has finished.

Journey to becoming a qualified paddlesport instructor and paddlesport leader.

Personal experience – the Paddle UK award structure allows those with the right level of personal paddling skills to enter at the award suited to them. For example, if you're a confident sea kayaker in moderate environments you can go straight to your moderate sea kayak leader. What does this mean? Well, that experience is vital to progress through the awards quickly. The more time you can get out on the water the better! Make sure you keep a record of your time on the water too.

Register for Paddle UK and familiarise yourself with the resources available to you and the awards you'll be doing.

More info [here](#)

Attend a Safeguarding course, info [here](#)

Attend a First aid course info [here](#)

Paddlesport Leader [here](#)





An example itinerary of awards

Paddlesport Safety Rescue info [here](#)

Paddlesport Instructor Info [here](#)

Paddlesport Leader Training Info [here](#)

Intro White Water Safety Info [here](#)

Personal Performance Awards (dependant on progress) [here](#)

Kit that Plas y Brenin can provide from its comprehensive kit stores whilst on the paddlesports module

Kayaks, Canoes, Stand Up Paddleboards

Paddles

Wetsuit

Paddling cag / top

Buoyancy aid

Spray deck

Helmet

Dry bag

Any other specialist equipment required on the course

Kit you'll need to provide:

Thermal / warm layers

Personal first aid kit

Warm hat

Footwear that you can get wet, wetsuit socks also advised.

You may want to purchase your own equipment. It is worth waiting until the course starts to get the advice of our instructors on the correct items to buy, rather than buying kit that may not be what you need. We may also be able to get you discount on kit from our brand partners Peak Paddlesport.





Mountain Biking

The mountain bike program is integrated with the paddle sport program. We will develop your personal riding skills with a focus on working towards the British Cycling level 2 mountain bike leader award. This is a 2 day training course with a 1 day assessment when you are ready to do it.

Pathway to become a mountain bike leader.

Be able to ride a mountain bike to the level of that required to ride red graded trails in a variety of locations.

- You will need to be a member of British Cycling info [Here](#)
- You will need to fill in a log book prior to the training info [Here](#) and meet the personal experience requirements info [Here](#)
- Attend the level 2 leader training course info [Here](#)
- Once ready, attend a 1 day assessment
- Do the online safeguarding accessed when you are registered for the course.
- Hold a first aid qualification info [Here](#)

The MTB program will consist of 4 days concentrating on personal skills and 2 days on the level 2 leader training.

Kit that Plas y Brenin can provide from its comprehensive kit store whilst on the mountain biking module:

Bike
Helmet
Knee pads





Kit you'll need to provide:

Personal clothing Warm layers Suitable footwear (trainers/cycling shoes)
Personal first aid kit Gloves

Bike program

Personal MTB skills
Climbing, decending, effective braking, optimum body position, gear selecton, cornering
Bike set up
MTB clothing and equipment
Bike safety checks
Bike maintenance/trailside repaires
Level 2 MTB Leader Training

Sample programme

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Introduction to the module Paddlesport Foundation Skills Paddlesport Safety and Rescue Mountain bike (MTB) skills	Further paddlesports skills Inland open water safety and rescue MTB skills	Paddlesports skills / varied craft Paddlesport Instructor training	Paddlesport Leader training MTB skills MTB level 2 leader training





Rock Climbing Module

This module is pitched to give you a well-rounded skill set as a climber, opening all climbing opportunities, whether you're climbing on sport crags, multipitch routes, or sea cliffs – you should feel confident to get stuck in! North Wales is a genuinely world class venue for rock climbing, we have everything on the doorstep – all styles of climbing, countless rock types and amazing routes. There's no better place to develop your climbing in the UK!

Solid experience and understanding of all things climbing is the ideal starting place to then consider the subtleties and nuances of climbing coaching and instruction. This module can develop skills towards and beyond the RCI, RCDI and MCI qualifications.

A week in the Peak District for a completely different climbing experience and rock type: gritstone, affectionately known as 'God's own rock!' This week provides the chance to develop lead climbing skills in a different environment and climb routes of a very different style.

If you have, or are close to the pre requisites (below) for the Climbing Wall Instructor and / or Rock Climbing Instructor, you'll be able to attend them within the module time. If you haven't, we'll help you to work towards them and attend when you're ready.





Pathway to climbing wall instructor

Training pre-requisites:

- Register for the Climbing Wall Instructor and set up a DLog profile [here](#)
- Be a member of the British Mountaineering Council [join here](#)
- Attend a first aid course [info here](#)
- Attend a Climbing Wall Instructor Training course

Personal experience / logbook requirements:

- Visits to three different climbing walls on at least 15 different occasions; this must include at least one major public wall
- 10 led routes at French grade 4 (or equivalent) [info here](#)

Assessment pre-requisites / logbook requirements:

- You must have logged a minimum of 30 personal climbing visits to at least three different climbing walls
- You must have led a minimum of 40 climbs on climbing walls
- You must be confident at leading routes at French grade 4 (or equivalent)
- You must have assisted in the supervision of at least 15 instructed sessions on at least two different walls including a large public facility in a variety of contexts. At least five of these sessions must have personal reflective comments recorded on DLOG
- Attend a Climbing Wall Instructor Assessment - PYB assessments [PYB assessments](#)

Pathway to rock climbing instructor:

- Register for the Rock Climbing Instructor and set up a DLog profile [here](#)
- Be a member of the British Mountaineering Council [join here](#)
- Attend a first aid course [info here](#)





Personal experience / logbook requirements:

- 15 led routes which must be graded rock climbs with traditional protection, 15 led routes at a climbing wall.
- 5 led routes which must be outdoor bolt-protected sport climbs [info here](#)
- Attend a Rock Climbing Instructor Training course

Assessment pre-requisites:

- You must be competently leading Severe grade climbs on outdoor crags with leader-placed protection.
- You must have led a minimum of 40 graded rock climbs with traditional protection at a variety of venues (of which at least 20 MUST be at Severe grade or above).
- You must be proficient in the use of climbing walls and have a minimum of 30 climbing wall leads graded at F4 or above.
- You must be proficient in outdoor bolt-protected sport climbing and have a minimum of 10 sport climb leads graded at F4 or above.
- You must have assisted in the supervision of 20 instructed sessions. These sessions should be at a variety of different venues with 10 being on indoor climbing walls and the other 10 on outdoor crags. A session is a half day or evening. At least five of these sessions must have personal reflective comments** recorded on DLOG
- Attend a Rock Climbing Instructor - PYB assessments [PYB assessments](#)

Kit that Plas y Brenin can provide from its comprehensive kit store whilst on the mountaineering module:

Rock climbing shoes	Harness
Waterproof jacket and trousers	Climbing rack / equipment
Rucksack	Ropes
Helmet	

Any other specialist equipment required on the course.





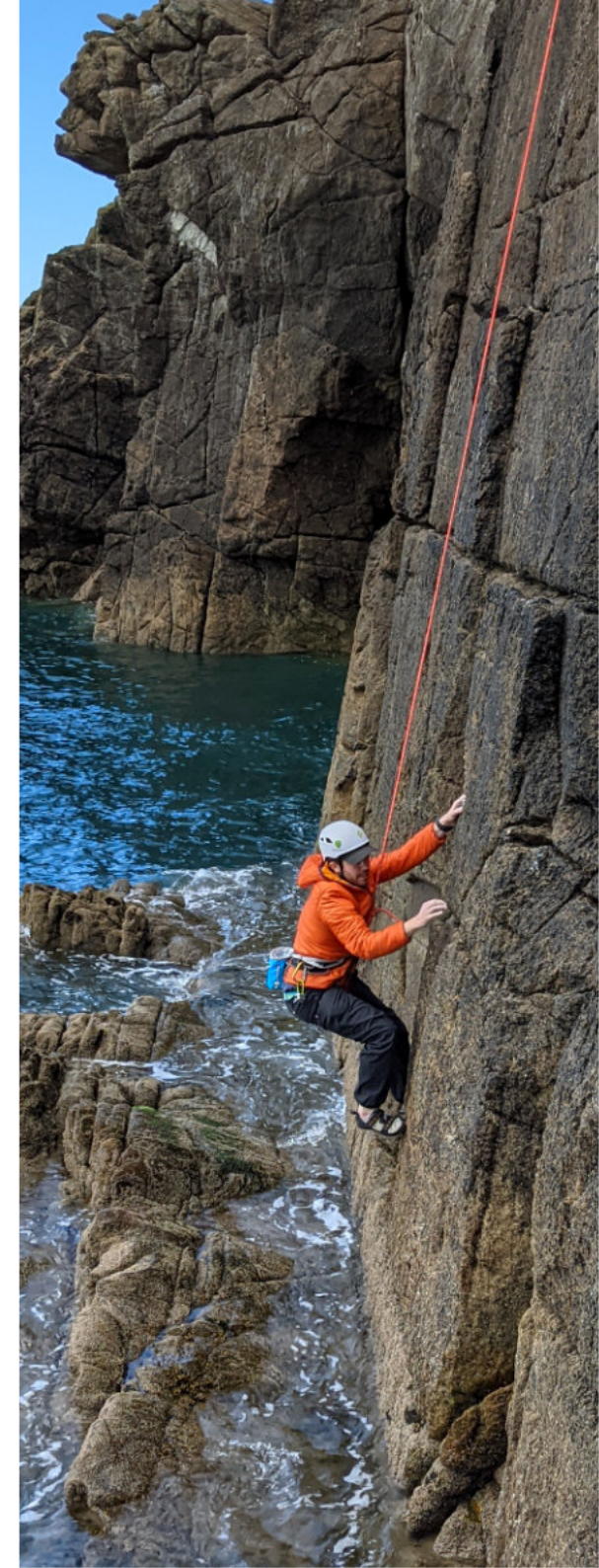
Kit you'll need to provide:

Thermal / warm layers
Warm hat

At least 2 pairs of gloves
Personal first aid kit

Sample programme

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Introduction to module Indoor / outdoor climbing Movement skills BMC Fundamentals 1&2	Single pitch climbing Extra staff for more flexibility Climbing Wall Instructor training Foundation Coach training	Peak District Single pitch climbing	Extra staff for more flexibility Rock Climbing Instructor training





After The Instructor Development Programme

What happens after the Instructor Development Programme?

This completely depends upon you. We'll help as much as possible to give ideas of people and organisations to contact if you'd like to pursue work in the outdoors depending on your experience and aims for the future. Recent Fast Trackers have done all sorts of things, they include:

- Gaining a contract at an outdoor centre
- Working at a climbing wall
- Leading Young People's overseas expeditions
- Setting up a business
- Freelancing for other providers
- Working in an outdoor education department in a school
- Running safety cover for events companies (such as a 3 Peaks Challenge)
- Delivering Duke of Edinburgh training and qualifying expeditions
- Working in film safety

Some people have followed the Fast Track scheme with a yearlong position as a Trainee Instructor or Centre Assistant at PYB, which has then led to freelance and contracted work for some. While this isn't common, it has happened several times in recent years.

We're always keen to hear what Fast Trackers have been up to and try to support them as best we can – the door is always open and we're always more than happy to help people when we can.





Learn more at our webinars

We will be running a series of webinars throughout 2025 designed to answer all your questions about our Instructor Development Programme. Use the links to book your place.

May 8

Jun 26

Sep 4

Nov 6

If you are unable to attend the webinar, simply register your interest below , and we'll send you the recording along with the latest news, updates and special promotions.

Register





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