



Picture credit: Helen Farley

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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Mountain Training England 2022 – The People

Member Organisations	Representatives
Association for Physical Education	Nicky Scott
Association of British Climbing Walls Training Trust	Nicholas Parkin
Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres	Gareth Davies
Association of Mountaineering Instructors	Paul Smith
British Association of International Mountain Leaders	Scott Smith
British Association of Mountain Guides	Rob Spencer
British Mountaineering Council	Claudia Sarner
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	Alan Pashley
Institute for Outdoor Learning	Elspeth Mason
GirlGuiding	Tarja Wilson/ Gill Beazley
Joint Services Mountain Training Centre	Chris Forrest
Mountain Rescue England and Wales	Mike Margeson
Outdoor Education Advisors Panel	David Armstrong
Plas y Brenin	Helen Barnard
Scout Association	Ivor Lewis
Board of Directors	
Chair	Peter Stacey
Vice Chair	Tony Halliwell
Treasurer	Neil Adshead
BMC representative	Sharon Kennedy
Independent Director	Jan Doyle
Independent Director	Joanna Corris Wright
Director	Sue Manns
Staff	
Executive Officer	Guy Jarvis
Development Officer	Mark Walker
Training Officer	Jon Garside
Governance & Equity Officer	Cath Luke
Customer Service and Operations Manager	Becky Jeffrey
Partnerships Liaison Officer	Maddie Sweetman
Provider Support Administrator & Skills Course Development Co-ordinator	Katherine Thomas
Customer Service Team	Laura Griffiths Susan Gathercole Fran Jones Megan Griffin Rich Snaith



Chair's report – Pete Stacey

I was reminded about the importance and value of good leaders and instructors whilst walking in the Wicklow Mountains in Ireland. Despite less than perfect weather I was able to witness some school groups walking in the hills with minimal equipment and without much evidence of them being involved in the planning of their journey, navigating, or understanding the scenery, the geology, or the native flora.

These issues are what make assessed, competent leaders and instructors stand out when observing groups being led in the hills or the crags. Mountain Training England spends much time and money in observing course delivery to ensure that trainers and assessors are working to high quality standards. We encourage that course syllabi are followed not slavishly but use the environment and activity to enhance the learning for candidates and embed the principles of good quality leadership and supervision.

This theme of high-quality delivery has exercised Mountain Training England Directors and staff throughout 2022. We are always moderating qualification scheme courses and in one case, after a considerable process, we took the difficult decision to terminate a course provider's contract. It is a matter of regret that this situation occurred, but we have a duty to ensure that high quality, safe qualifications are delivered and to be confident that all candidates are trained and assessed to the same national standard.

The Board subsequently reviewed its policies and ensured that standards were being maintained. Moderation of course delivery is an important method of ensuring trainers and assessors are current, competent, and delivering to the high standards candidates pay for, and which Mountain Training England requires. Attendance at the Providers' Conference also ensures that course staff are in touch with their peers and can discuss common themes and ideas with other course directors and staff from across the country.



Focussing on the issues of quality course provision as outlined above has not meant we have ignored the rest of our strategic forward plan. We continue to work with partners at MTUKI on developing a coherent sustainability policy that all Mountain Training Boards can sign up to. Our focus on widening participation has continued and we had more candidates signing up for award schemes from diverse communities and groups. We have supported the 'Outdoors for All' document, promoting public access to the outdoors, and which was sent to the Government by the BMC with support from the Ramblers, RYA, British Canoeing, British Cycling, The British Horse Society, and the Open Spaces Society.

Mountain Training England continued in 2022 to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and course numbers rose to levels comparable to 2019 pre-pandemic levels. Thanks to good stewardship and careful finance control, we were able to end the year on a small surplus. My thanks to our Treasurer and the Finance and Audit Committee for their sterling work.

In October we ran an incredibly successful two-day course conference at Plas Y Brenin entitled Women in Mountain Training conference. The event was fully booked and an extensive programme of workshops and discussions took place. Presentations were filmed and uploaded to the website and a future event is planned for 2024.

Our partnership work continues apace, and we have established reciprocal arrangements with National Navigation Award Scheme, and a joint statement issued by both organisations released.



We have maintained relationships/contact with partners via newsletter/emails & developed relationships resulting in new skills providers applications particularly for those organisations working with armed forces veterans – Climb 2 Recovery has become a skills scheme provider and we continue to build with the Royal British Legion. Finally, we continue to work with other partners on developing guidance and good practice for trainers and candidates regarding periods/menopause/toileting in the outdoors.

Picture credit: Craig Grimes / Community Experience



Overall, it has been a busy year and we look forward to building on these achievements in 2023. My thanks to all the Council members for their advice and support; to the Providers and Course Staff for their efforts in delivering high quality courses and skill schemes; and to the staff of Mountain Training England and the Board for their considerable efforts throughout 2022.



Pete Stacey
Chair, Mountain Training England.



Honorary Treasurer's report – Neil Adshead

Firstly, as ever, a big thank you to the Finance and Audit Committee and the accounts team for their hard work and support during the year.

Overview

After several years of uncertainty, thankfully 2022 was a relatively quiet year for the finances. We started the year with a conservative budget, not really knowing how we were going to recover from the impacts of the pandemic in the previous years. As the year progressed it became apparent that people were really keen to get back to the outdoors and enjoy the mountains with a positive impact on the finances.

That isn't to say there weren't any shocks in the year. In February Russia invaded Ukraine and this caused ripples in stock exchanges across the world. This had a negative impact on the value of our investments beyond our original budget but thankfully by the end of the year this had largely reversed.

The budget was based on 2019 figures i.e. pre Covid, as adjusted for inflation. This anticipated an operating deficit of £20,700 with an overall deficit of £37,458 (taking into account Sport England grant and investments) with reserves reducing to £461,139, from £509,847 at the start of the year.

As the year progressed income rose slightly higher than budget and expenditure was controlled such that a small operating surplus of £2,510 (2021, deficit £4,723) with an overall surplus of £5,803 (2021, £13,995). There being a significant loss on investments.

Looking at the figures in more detail:

Income

Income for the year recovered from 2021 (£297,214) and was slightly ahead of budget at £351,194.

The pattern of income across the year returned to pre Covid levels with almost a third of registration fees being received in quarter 1.



The overall level of income from course fees was promising despite some fluctuations throughout the year £31,220 (budget £28,611). The level of course fees is being monitored to ensure this recovery continues given the significant changes that have been made to fees for skills course.

Sport England grant of £41,750 (2021 £52,250) was a very important element of our income and the directors would once again like to thank Sport England for their support.

During the year, changes were made to how we receive the Sport England grant. Whilst we received slightly less in the year than we anticipated (the budget being updated for this) grant monies have been agreed for the next 5 years which will give more certainty in forecasting. There is some detail to this but overall it is a much better position for us.

Expenditure

Expenditure in the year was very well controlled totalling £328,991 (2021 £301,937) and was slightly less than budgeted.

The Skills and Training fund was again budgeted at £5,000. The monies from this fund are to encourage outdoor participation by the BAME community. It remains difficult to find suitable projects to spend all of this budget and the expenditure of £2,790 (2021, £4,258) reflects this.

If these funds are not spent in the year then they are 'lost' so it was agreed to utilise some of this budget in 2023 to fund projects encouraging disabled access to the outdoors. This will give a greater opportunity to spend the total funds of £5,000.

EDI fund



As highlighted in 2021 an important aspect of the planning was to 'designate' £25,000 of reserves to support minority and ethnic communities to wider participation in the outdoors, providing financial support to both individuals and projects.

By the end of 2022 £1,374 of these funds had been spent. However, during the year several suitable projects had been identified and whilst funds have not yet been spent, the vast majority of the fund has

been 'committed' to these projects and the monies should be spent in the following year.

Picture credit: Emily Ward Photography



Investments

As mentioned above, the war in Ukraine caused a significant fall in the value of our investments.

Whilst we initially budgeted for a deficit on valuation of £10,000 this was increased to £35,000 to hopefully give a better reflection of the year end position.

However, by the year end losses of almost £30,000 mid way through the year had recovered to a deficit of £16,400.

Whilst the value of the investments is outside of our control, they can have a significant impact on our overall results. The funds have been held for many years and in 2023 we will look to review all our investments and funds to ensure they meet our current requirements in terms of risks and sustainability etc.

Reserves

Reserves increased during the year to £514,045 (2021 £509,847). This is a really good outcome in a year where it was very difficult to assess the ongoing impact of the pandemic. But, as last year, it is a reflection of the importance of the outdoor experience within the community at large.

In conclusion, the Board were pleased with overall performance in the year and that the budget had been set at a realistic level.

It was good to have a relatively quiet year and to have the opportunity to give some thought to the overall financial position of the charity in coming years.



Neil Adshead
Treasurer

30/05/22



Executive Officer's report – Guy Jarvis



2022 was our first full year without the effects of Covid. Registrations returned to pre-Covid levels along with course attendance. However, the two years of disruption have prevented more than 2000 newly qualified leaders entering the sector, on top of all those who left. As the cost of living crisis continues it looks like this effect may be felt for a while.

Year	Registrations	Training attendance	Assessment attendance
2019 (pre-Covid base)	6119	4039	2403
2020 (Covid restrictions)	4062	2179	1042
2021 (Covid recovery)	5234	3342	1440
2022	6166	4101	2526

Despite this, MTE continues to move forward with its five-year strategy now that it has secured funding for this period from Sport England, aligned to its own strategy; Uniting the Movement. Core to this is our drive to attract a wider demographic of candidates and participants. Our strategy has five key areas of focus:

The training pathway

We completed our Walking Schemes Review with the updating of all our walking leadership qualifications and the launch of a new one. The Camping Leader launched on 1st March 2022, replacing the Expedition Skills Module. This new qualification is more accessible and flexible than the ESM, with the training being delivered online – a first for Mountain Training. We also introduced the new Mountain Training leadership model and competencies to all these qualifications which align with similar models across the sector. This model defines leadership in a broader and clearer context than before and is more inclusive in its approach.



Quality provision

The confidence that employers, deployers and the public have in our qualified leaders depends on the quality of our provision. We have worked very hard to maintain this standard for the benefit of all our candidates and their future charges. Considerable resource is needed to manage all aspects of our provider recruitment, quality assurance and support throughout the year, the highpoint being our biennial provider conference at Plas y Brenin. We delivered our provider update workshop programme, an essential part of keeping our providers current and connected to the organisation. We have introduced training and resources on leadership, coaching, inclusion, safeguarding, teaching and assessment skills. This work is often unsung, but is so essential in maintaining the standards of our operations and therefore the public's trust in our work.

Sustainable delivery

2022 marked a return to financial stability as our registration and course fee income returned to pre-Covid levels. We have budgeted ourselves carefully and successfully through the pandemic and beyond due to the great skills of our finance team. Much work was done to develop our risk register and this is now monitored by the Board every quarter.

We work much more in partnership with a wide range of organisations to achieve our objectives now and the work of our Partners' Liaison Officer, is key to this. As a result we have a range of projects and partnerships with organisations such as Black Girls Hike, The National Navigation Award Scheme, Harveys Maps, All the Elements, The Association of British Climbing Walls, Sea Cadets, and the Outdoor Partnership.

On environmental sustainability our work practices have been transformed since the pandemic. Digital communications have allowed us to cut staff travel down drastically, yet hold more meetings online, than was ever possible before. We have extended this to much of our training and presentations which are often delivered online also. Where face to face training is required we have developed policies that encourage car sharing and the use of public transport – both for our providers and also for our candidates.

Supporting diversity

Early in the year we published a joint report on the demographics of adventure activity participation with many organisations across our sector called 'Your Movement Matters'. The partners had commissioned Leeds Beckett University to undertake the research on our behalf in order to provide insight on why some groups found it more difficult to access these activities than others. Much useful data and insight was gleaned to inform all of our participation strategies. One example being the generational change in participation being experienced in Black and Asian communities.



Subsequently we have developed relationships with a number of diverse participation groups and have been listening and learning of their needs. We have delivered a series of very successful inclusion workshops to our providers after considerable preparation with an expert trainer. We delivered many grants through our Skills and Training Fund to under-represented candidates and we established our Disability Fund which has had a very successful start.

Picture credit: Passion Fruit Pictures

A highlight of the year was our incredibly successful, and uplifting, Women's Leadership Conference in the autumn. This sold out event showcased the huge potential of female leaders. We have made great progress over the years with 35% of all our qualifications being awarded to women in 2022 (up from 18% in 2012), but there's always further to go.

To increase diversity and inclusion further we need a more diverse provider workforce. We are beginning to look at the structural filters we use to recruit and select these key role models, and to create more inclusive pathways into these roles.

Promoting our Mission

In order to spread our message as wide as we can we need to work with partners who have networks that can help us. With this in mind we have agreed a partnership arrangement with Cotswold Outdoors to support and promote our skills courses. We look forward to this developing over the coming year and bringing our offer to a broader audience than ever.

We have worked closely with the BMC and Plas y Brenin to present a hillwalking strategy and manifesto to Sport England. By their own measures hillwalking is the fastest growing single activity in the UK and one that we feel needs greater support to ensure it is pursued safely and sustainably.

As well as our regular online messaging we have presented at many events such as the Ten Tors, Keswick Mountain Festival, Association of British Climbing Walls conference, The Institute of Outdoor Learning and the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel.



Work ahead

We now look forward to 2023 and the development of a new indoor bouldering instructor qualification, responding to a strong demand from the sector. We also want to review the effectiveness of our assistant schemes and skills courses.

We have plans to update our website in late 2023 and increase our digital resource offer, including with regard to our mentoring programme. Some of these resources could become income generating from a wider audience.

We are planning more engagement with under-represented groups and want to see the publication of a 'Climbing for All' document. We will continue to work with our partners to deliver our EDI strategy and promote safeguarding throughout our sector.

Finally, but very importantly, we want to promote our members and qualification holders to the public, through partners such as the BMC while we implement the Cotswold partnership activations to promote our skills courses.

Guy Jarvis

Executive Officer, MTE

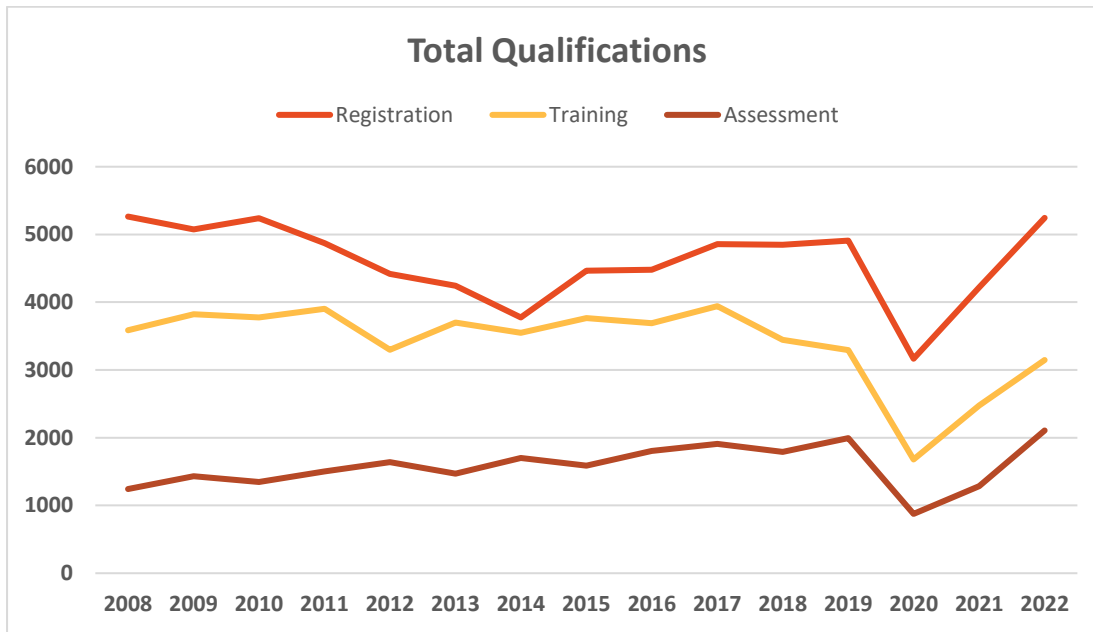


Picture credit: Bex Currie



The years in numbers

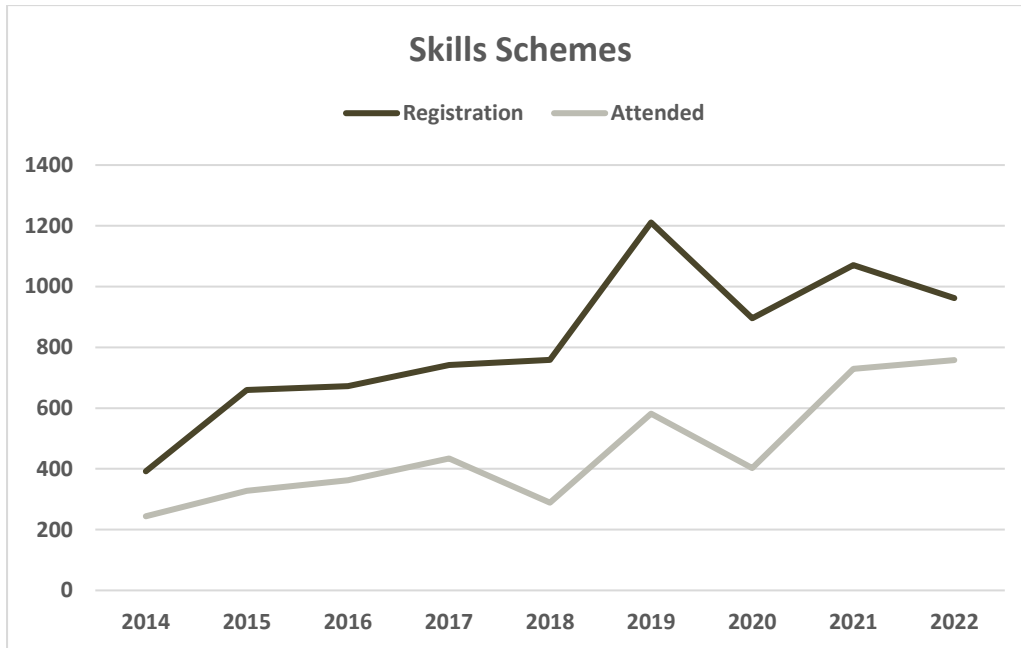
A look at statistical trends over the last fifteen years.



This is the headline graph of our qualification operations showing:

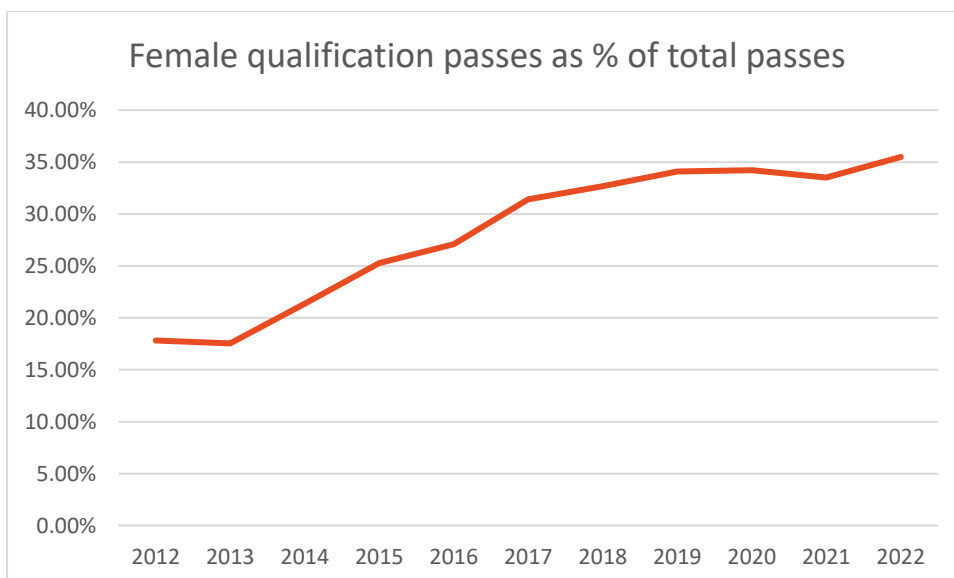
- a) Overall registrations growing steadily from 2014 (ignoring Covid) but now similar to 2008!
- b) Training attendance not having recovered fully from Covid and possibly indicating a COL dip.
- c) The number of passes nearly doubling over the fifteen year period as our offer becomes more diverse and better fits candidates' needs. We are producing more qualified leaders.

NB: CMS records training and assessment attendance on courses delivered by MTE providers. Many MTE candidates will attend courses run by MTC providers. This depresses our training and assessment figures slightly.



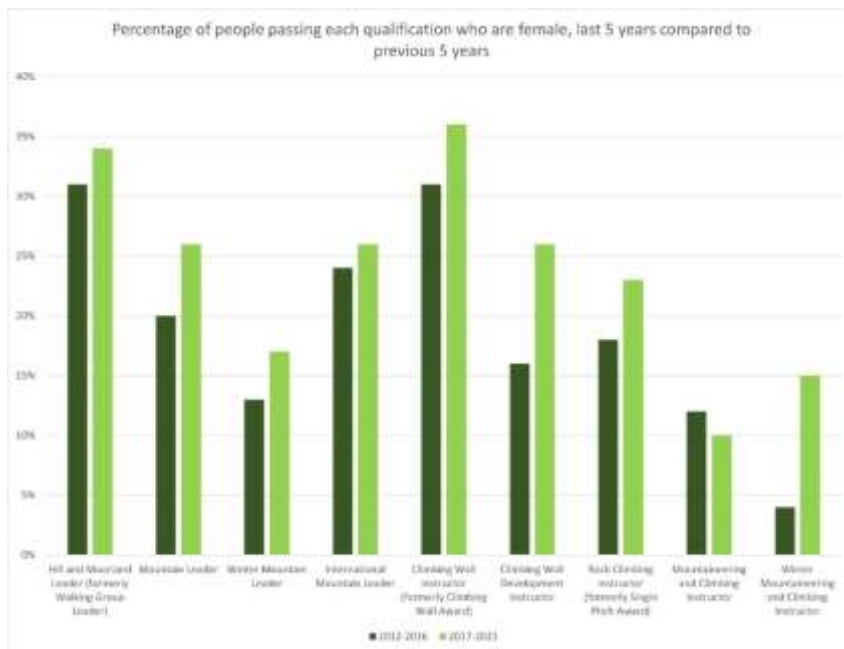
Skills courses have shown good growth over time, though this has tailed off in the last year. Registration figures are less significant with the new delivery model and provide no income.

Female candidates



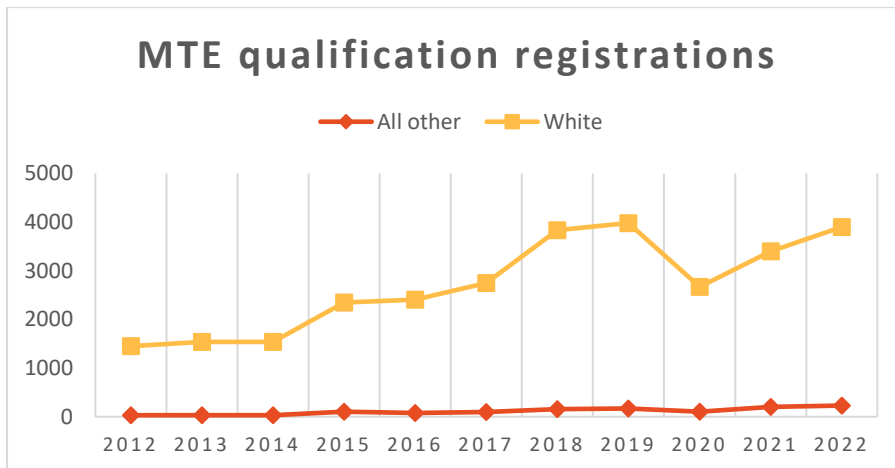


We have had good success with encouraging more female candidates into leadership with the percentage of female passes doubling overall since 2012. Female candidates now make up over third of all passes, though we know that this rate drops off for the higher qualifications.

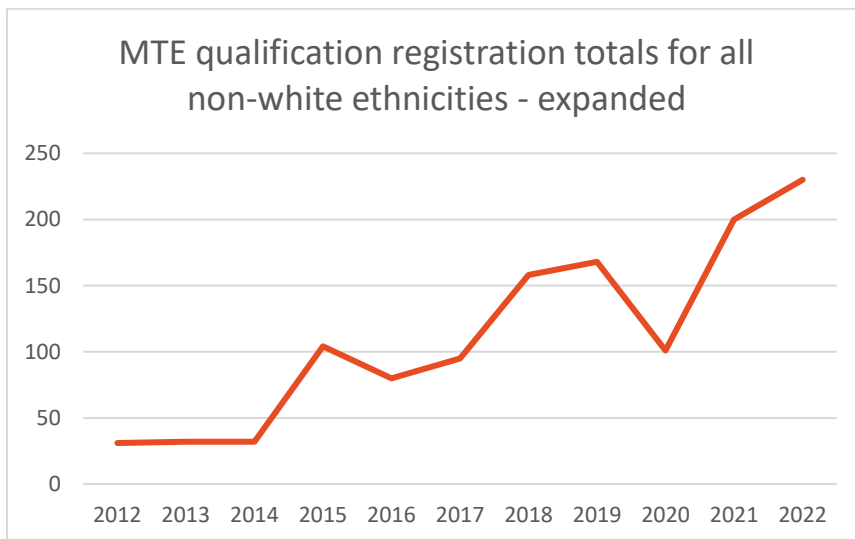


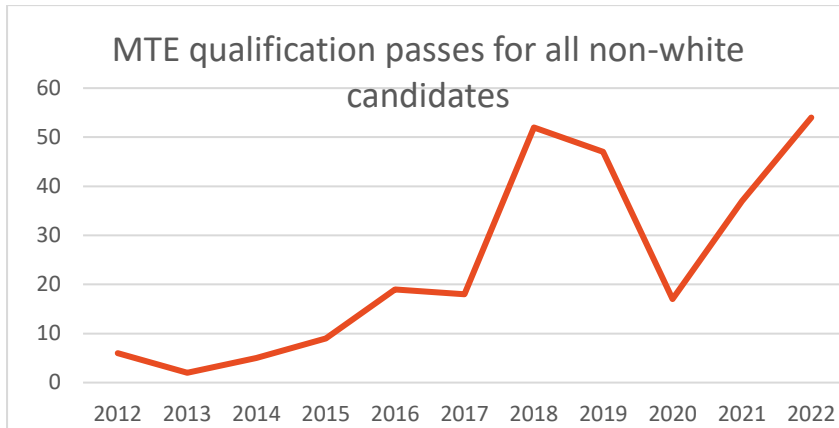


Ethnicity data



Ethnic diversity is our weakest demographic performance indicator as the above graph shows. However, the graph below looks more closely at the blue line and shows improvement from a very low base. Passes were more affected by Covid.





These two graphs show the growth in established qualifications. They do not show Camping Leader, Exped Module, Indoor Climbing Assistant, or Abseil Module data for consistency. Total passes including these qualifications were 79 for 2022, which is a significant improvement on fifteen years ago.

Non-white candidates have risen to 6% of our registrations for qualifications.

4% of our newly qualified candidates are non-white now. However, non-white groups make up 18% of the England population. There is far more work to do.