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**Rock Climbing Development Instructor**

**Skills checklist**

**Introduction**

This skills checklist is designed to enable you, as a Rock Climbing Development Instructor candidate, to both record what you have covered as your training progresses e.g. as a technical diary and, at the close of your course, reflect on the syllabus topics covered during your training allowing you to rate yourself using the ‘Learning stage’ described below.

It is hoped that this process will then assist you in completing your Action Plan (which you can share and discuss with your course director at your end of course debrief) which will guide you in consolidating and developing your experience and skills post training and pre-assessment.

When reflecting you might find it useful to refer back to the Rock Climbing Development Instructor candidate handbook. In addition, the MTUK publication – “Rock Climbing” – details many of the techniques that might be used by a Rock Climbing Development Instructor holder and will be useful for refreshing your memory of specific techniques or skills covered at training.

**How to appraise yourself**

The syllabus is broken down into headings. Against each competency you can give yourself a ‘Learning stage’ number – each number 1-3 corresponds with a description as detailed below. Learning stage 3 would very broadly equate with the degree of competency you’d expect from a qualified and experienced Rock Climbing Instructor holder.

**Learning stage descriptions**

**Cognitive or understanding phase (Learning stage 1)**

In the first stage of learning performances are inconsistent and success is not guaranteed. Performing the skill requires all of the candidate’s attention and so they rely on the trainer for cues. This is a process of trial and error. Correct performances must be reinforced through external feedback.

**Associative or verbal motor phase (Learning stage 2)**

Performances are becoming more consistent as knowledge and skills are being formed. While the simpler parts of the performance now look fluent and are well learned, the more complex elements require most of the candidate’s spare attention. The candidate is starting to get a sense of internal 'kinaesthetic' and ‘cognitive’ feedback when they perform or apply a skill well. They are starting to detect and correct their own errors.

**Autonomous or motor phase (Learning stage 3)**

In the final stage of learning, performances have become consistent, fluid and ‘unconsciously competent’. The knowledge and skills involved are well learned and stored in the long-term memory. There is now spare attention which can be focused on group members and adapting appropriate leadership approaches and techniques as applied to situations. To retain the new skill at this level, it must be regularly practiced to reinforce the motor and cognitive programmes.

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| **Technical competence** | | |
| Rock Climbing Development Instructors will have a sound knowledge of lead climbing on both equipped and leader placed protection. They will be able to identify and evaluate commonly used climbing equipment and demonstrate and teach its use to individuals during a lead climbing session. Candidates will be personally competent in a range of both indoor and outdoor climbing techniques and be able to provide clear demonstration and effective tuition when teaching novice climbers to lead, on both equipped and leader placed protection. They will be able to: | | |
| **1. Equipment** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 1.1 Demonstrate appropriate use, care and maintenance of a wide range of commonly used trad and sport climbing equipment. |  |  |
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| **2. Anchors** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 2.1 Demonstrate a variety of anchor placements appropriate to the situation. |  |  |
| 2.2 Demonstrate appropriate use of commonly used in-situ climbing equipment. |  |  |
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| **3. Belaying** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 3.1 Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of different belay systems and choose one appropriate to the situation. This will include systems appropriate to novice and developing rock climbers in ascent and descent. |  |  |
| 3.2 Demonstrate the use of commonly used belay devices appropriate to the situation. |  |  |
| 3.3 Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of good practice when arresting leader falls. |  |  |
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| **4. Personal skills** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 4.1 Lead single pitch rock climbs of VS 4c in a safe, competent and assured, manner whilst demonstrating good technique. |  |  |
| 4.2 Choose and lead single pitch, F6a sport climbs in a safe, competent and assured manner whilst demonstrating good technique. |  |  |
| 4.3 Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of good practice when taking a leader fall. |  |  |
| 4.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the safety chain and fall factors in relation to lead climbing. |  |  |
| 4.5 Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of different sources of information to select appropriate venues and rock climbs. |  |  |
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| **5. Background Knowledge** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 5.1 Demonstrate an awareness of a wide range of rock climbing disciplines and grading. |  |  |
| 5.2 Demonstrate an awareness of the history and development of climbing. |  |  |
| 5.3 Be familiar with the role and philosophy of Mountain Training and its schemes, the mountaineering councils, climbing clubs and NICAS. |  |  |
| 5.4 Have an understanding of Mountain Training’s climbing pathway. |  |  |
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| **Management and decision-making** | | |
| Rock Climbing Development Instructors should be able to independently organise, plan, manage and deliver safe and progressive learning-to-lead climbing sessions to individuals with a range of climbing abilities. They should be able to: | | |
| **6. Instructor responsibilities** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 6.1 Explain their general responsibilities to the climber(s) and, where appropriate, to parents/guardians, the organising authority, committee or manager of the activity, outdoor/facility users, environmental agencies, local residents, landowners and the general public. |  |  |
| 6.2 Explain their specific responsibilities to choose appropriate aims and objectives to complete detailed preparations and ensure that the climbers are adequately equipped and briefed for the activity. |  |  |
| 6.3 Demonstrate an understanding of the current legislation and legal responsibilities that relate to the duty of care to individuals and climbers under their charge, including safeguarding issues specific to supervising young people and vulnerable adults. |  |  |
| 6.4 Demonstrate an awareness of the variety of barriers to participation, including mental and physical disability, ethnicity, fitness/health and be aware of the impact of various medical conditions. |  |  |
| 6.5 Describe how to access national guidance on instructor responsibilities and good practice. |  |  |
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| **7. Leadership and decision-making** | **Learning Stage** | **Notes** |
| 7.1 The Leader demonstrates adaptable leadership behaviours and decision-making |  |  |
| 7.1.1 Monitor the climbers, environmental conditions (including when operating on outdoor artificial structures and activity, and can adapt their behaviour and decisions to meet ongoing safety, climber and task requirements. |  |  |
| 7.1.2 Be consistent and confident in their decision making to achieve positive outcomes and communicate these clearly to the climber(s). |  |  |
| 7.2 VISION – The leader is a positive role model and aims to inspire others. |  |  |
| 7.2.1 Articulate clear and agreed values for their climber(s); lead by example; and behave how they want the climber(s) to behave. |  |  |
| 7.3 SUPPORT – The leader creates a positive and supportive environment for the climber(s). |  |  |
| 7.3.1 Recognise, respect and adapt to individual needs, differences, strengths and abilities. |  |  |
| 7.3.2 Encourage independent learning; establish an environment where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities and provide clear and positive feedback to support this. |  |  |
| 7.4 CHALLENGE – The leader provides relevant and appropriately challenging experiences. |  |  |
| 7.4.1 Agree climber goals and calibrate the level of challenge to individual abilities and motivations. |  |  |
| 7.4.2 Encourage and support the climber(s) to be part of the decision-making process and encourage them to overcome their own challenges. |  |  |
| 7.5 The leader understands the Mountain Training ethos of leadership and has developed their own. They should be able to: |  |  |
| 7.5.1 Articulate their own leadership ethos and beliefs along with those of Mountain Training. |  |  |
| 7.5.2 Acknowledge and describe a range of leadership approaches, models and associated ethos. |  |  |
| 7.6 The instructor understands the value of processing and learning from experience. They should be able to: |  |  |
| 7.6.1 Facilitate a personal post-activity review to make sense of, and develop, themes/events occurring during the activity and identify the lessons learned and how to incorporate them into their own practice. |  |  |
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| **8. Knowledge and demonstration of techniques** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 8.1 Select a suitable venue and activities appropriate to the needs of the participants. |  |  |
| 8.2. Effectively teach a broad range of skills and techniques appropriate to the developing novice and more experienced rock climber. This includes: |  |  |
| 8.2.1 Teach appropriate climbing movement to assist effective and safe lead climbing. |  |  |
| 8.2.2 Teach lead rock climbing in a progressive and safe manner. |  |  |
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| **9. Personal safety** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 9.1. Manage personal safety whilst supervising participants progressing to and undertaking lead climbing. |  |  |
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| **10. Hazards and emergency procedures** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 10.1 Carry out dynamic risk assessment throughout each climbing session and appropriately react to a changing environment. |  |  |
| 10.2 Demonstrate an awareness of the hazards presented to other site users by lead climbers and act in a way to keep these minimised. |  |  |
| 10.3 Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate warming up and injury avoidance techniques for lead climbers. |  |  |
| 10.4 Demonstrate an understanding of how to avoid and deal with common problems. |  |  |
| 10.5 Assess an incident on a crag to determine a safe, efficient and effective solution. |  |  |
| 10.6 In the case of an incident describe how to call for relevant assistance. |  |  |
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| **Teaching and learning skills** | | |
| Rock Climbing Development Instructors need to give tuition and support to climbers who are learning and developing their skills. They should be able to: | | |
| **11. Teaching and learning skills** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 11.1 Demonstrate an ability to adapt the teaching style to meet individual needs. |  |  |
| 11.2 Design and implement a plan to introduce progressive activities to ensure development of appropriate knowledge, skills and experience over time. |  |  |
| 11.3 Observe and analyse individual performances to provide appropriate, effective and timely feedback for participants. |  |  |
| 11.4 Evaluate a session and its outcomes to inform the planning of future sessions. |  |  |
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| **The climbing environment** | | |
| Rock Climbing Development Instructors should be informed and experienced in a variety of outdoor climbing environments, including both ‘sport’ and ‘traditional’ venues. They should be able to: | | |
| **12. Access** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 12.1 Source current access information and act accordingly. |  |  |
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| **13. Conservation** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 13.1 Have a broad working knowledge of the mountain environment including geology, natural history, ﬂora and fauna. |  |  |
| 13.2 Operate in such a way as to minimise impact on the environment. |  |  |
| 13.3 Pass on environmental knowledge in an engaging way to educate and enthuse. |  |  |
| 13.4 Manage individuals and groups so that they have minimal impact |  |  |
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| **14. Etiquette and ethics** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 14.1 Have a broad working knowledge of local rock climbing and mountaineering ethics. |  |  |
| 14.2 Operate a flexible programme of activities to accommodate other site users. |  |  |
| 14.3 Describe the site-specific requirements and agreements relating to teaching leading on different climbing walls and artificial structure |  |  |
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**Appendix:**

**Assessment requirements**

* You must have completed a Rock Climbing Development Instructor training course.
* You must be familiar with the syllabus.
* You must have physically attended and completed (i.e. not online) a first aid course which involved at least two full days or sixteen hours of instruction and included an element of assessment.

Post training and before presenting yourself for assessment:

* You must have logged a minimum of 10 rock climbing teaching days with students at a variety of outdoor venues.
* You must have led a minimum of 30 single pitch routes using leader placed protection in three different climbing areas at VS 4c or above and recorded them in DLOG. You may include full multi-pitch routes using leader placed protection (up to 50% of the requirement).
* You must have led a minimum of 30 sport climbs in three different climbing areas at 6a or above and recorded them in DLOG. Up to 50% of this experience can be outside the UK and Ireland.

The Rock Climbing Development Instructor assessment will involve a minimum of 24 hours contact time delivered over a minimum of 3 days

**Terrain definition for** **the Rock Climbing Development Instructor**

For the purposes of this scheme, a single pitch route is one which:

* is climbed without intermediate stances
* is described as a single pitch in the guidebook
* allows climbers to be lowered to the ground at all times
* is non-tidal, non-serious and has little objective danger
* presents no difficulties on approach or retreat, such as route finding, scrambling or navigating

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| **Rock Climbing Development Instructor**  **ACTION PLAN** | |
| What is the timescale for doing your assessment? |  |
| How many teaching days at a variety of outdoor venues have you done? (Post training and prior to assessment you must have logged a minimum of 10 rock climbing teaching days with students at a variety of outdoor venues). |  |
| How many rock climbs have you led? (Post training and prior to assessment you must have led a MINIMUM of 30 single pitch routes using leader placed protection in three different climbing areas at VS 4c or above and recorded them in DLOG.) NOTE: You may include full multi-pitch routes using leader placed protection (up to 50% of the requirement). |  |
| How many sport climbs have you led? (Post training and prior to assessment) you must have led a MINIMUM of 30 sport climbs in three different climbing areas at 6a or above and recorded them in DLOG). NOTE: Up to 50% of this experience can be outside the UK and Ireland. |  |
| List three syllabus areas that you feel/think particularly confident or practised in. |  |
| List three syllabus areas that you feel/think require further practice. |  |
| As part of the consolidation period you must have logged a minimum of 10 rock climbing teaching days with students at a variety of outdoor venues post training. How do you plan to gain this experience? |  |
| What opportunities can you foresee for gaining experience to develop your Rock Climbing Development instructor skillset? |  |
| Given your answers to the above briefly outline your way forward for becoming a Rock Climbing Development Instructor. |  |