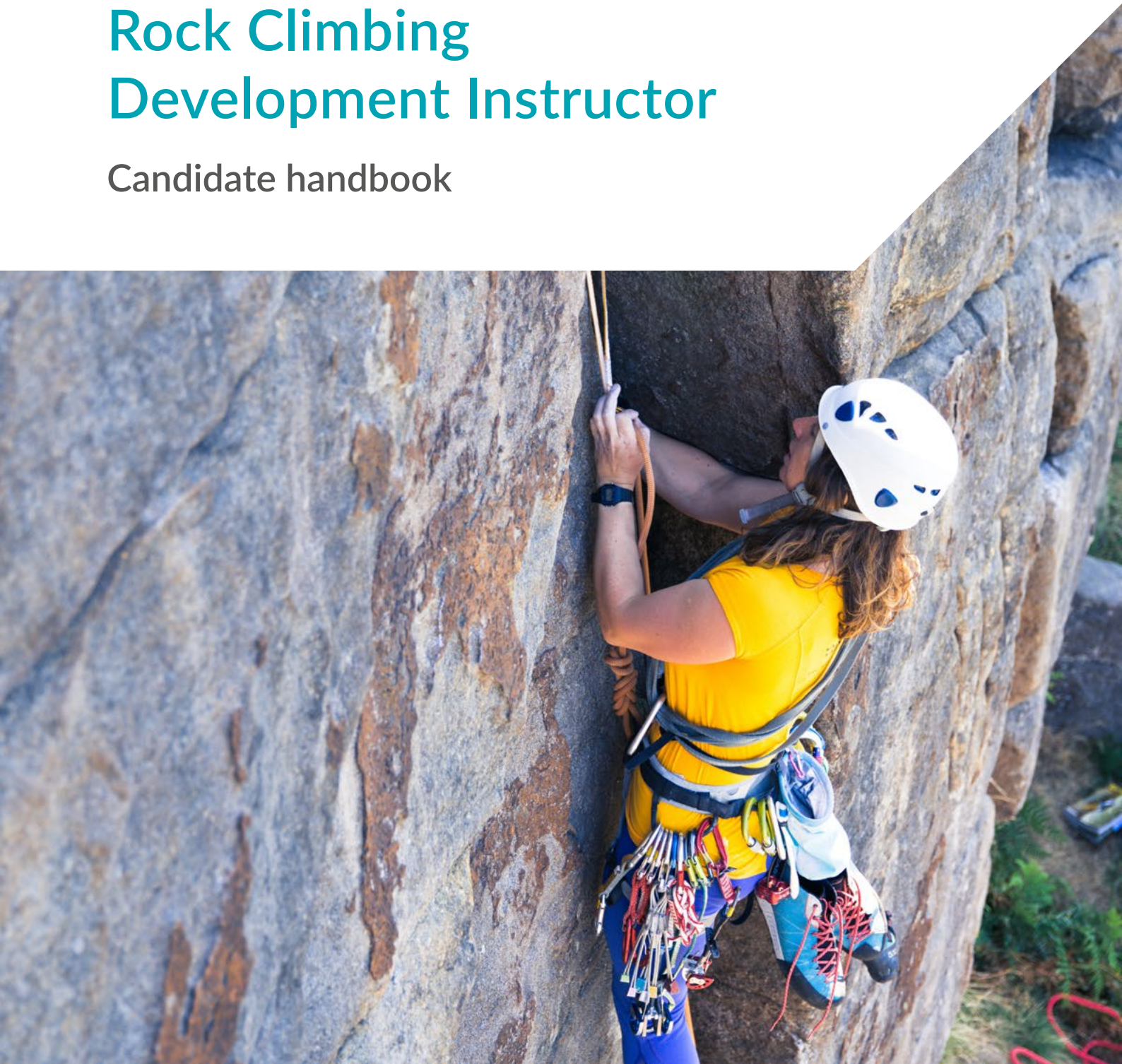




**Mountain
Training**

Rock Climbing Development Instructor

Candidate handbook





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Preface

This handbook has been designed to support candidates through Mountain Training's Rock Climbing Development Instructor qualification. It contains useful information about the various stages in the qualification as well as the syllabus and guidance notes.

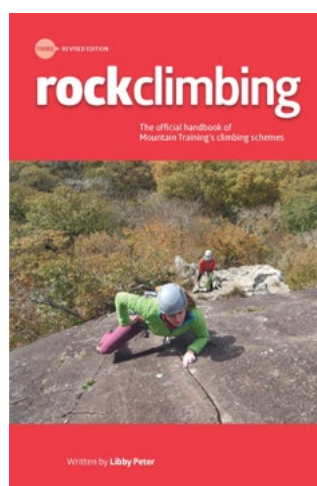
Participation statement

Mountain Training recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions. Mountain Training has developed a range of training and assessment schemes and associated supporting literature to help instructors manage these risks and to enable new participants to have positive experiences while learning about their responsibilities.

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the preparation of the contents of this handbook, by attending Mountain Training working party meetings and by making detailed and constructive comments on the draft. Grateful thanks are due to volunteers and staff from the Climbing Awards Review Working Group, National Mountain Training organisation council members, course providers, staff of the mountaineering councils, members of the Association of Mountaineering Instructors, Mountain Training Association, staff from the National Mountain Centres and members of The Association of British Climbing Walls for their help and support.

Thanks also to the following individuals and organisations whose photographs bring the handbook to life: Alan Halewood, Alex Messenger, Charlie Low, Guy Jarvis, John Cousins, Karl Midlane, Mike Hutton, NICAS and Outdoor Adventure North West.



Rock Climbing

Throughout this handbook there are references to Rock Climbing by Libby Peter which we publish to support developing rock climbers and instructors. It is packed with essential information and techniques and we have listed the relevant chapter(s) for each syllabus area.



1. Qualification pathway

1.1 Introduction

The Rock Climbing Development Instructor qualification is for experienced instructors wishing to develop a participant's rock climbing proficiency. This development may extend to lead climbing.

1.2 Scope of the qualification

A qualified Rock Climbing Development Instructor can:

- Develop individuals to lead rock climbs in a single pitch environment using leader placed (traditional climbing) and equipped (sport climbing) protection.

1.2.1 Terrain

A qualified Rock Climbing Development Instructor can operate on:

- Single pitch* trad and sport crags.
- Indoor and outdoor bouldering venues.
- Climbing walls & towers.

*See Appendix 1 for a definition of a single pitch crag.

1.2.2 Exclusions

The qualification does not cover:

- General mountaineering.
- Multi-pitch rock climbing.
- Access to tidal sea cliffs or any other location where retreat is not easily possible.



1.3 Stages in the qualification

1.3.1 Registration prerequisites

Registration for the Rock Climbing Development Instructor scheme is an application process and you need to meet the following prerequisites:

- You must be a qualified Rock Climbing Instructor.
- You must have delivered a minimum of 20 days as a Rock Climbing Instructor at a variety of venues and with a variety of groups, recorded in DLOG.
- You must have led a minimum of 60 named single pitch routes using leader placed protection in three different climbing areas at VS 4c or above and logged 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 60 sport climbs in three different climbing areas at 6a or above and logged them in DLOG. Up to 50% of this experience can be outside the UK and Ireland.

Once your experience is recorded in DLOG you are required to;

- Register for the Rock Climbing Development Instructor scheme through CMS. Registration incurs a non-refundable fee.
- Notify Mountain Training (via the 'Send To Mountain Training' button on the 'Share' tab in DLOG) that your DLOG is ready to be reviewed.

A technical officer will then review your experience in DLOG and if it meets the minimum requirements, you will be notified by email that your registration on the scheme has been approved.

Applications with less than the minimum experience cannot be approved.

If your application is not successful, you will receive feedback on how best to fulfil the experience requirements and your registration application will be held open until your successful registration.

1.3.2 Training prerequisites

- Your registration must have been approved.
- You will not be able to book onto a training course until your registration has been approved by Mountain Training.



1.3.3 Consolidation period

During the period between training and assessment you are expected to reflect upon and evaluate your skills and techniques in preparation for assessment. You should seek a wide variety of quality experiences to help you achieve this.

Undertaking or observing only similar sessions to those experienced before training is unlikely to be the best way to consolidate the new skills and techniques learnt.

The Mountain Training Association provides workshops to support the candidate journey for trainees and qualified instructors.

Mountain Training has provided a self-assessment skills checklist for this scheme to assist you in completing any action plan discussed with the training course director.

See below for the minimum requirements for assessment. It is expected that the consolidation period will take in excess of 12 months.



Our association can help you as you work towards one of our qualifications. We are building a community of confident and expert leaders, instructors and coaches, that we hope you will join.

1.3.4 Assessment prerequisites

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.
- 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.



2. Course structure

2.1 Training

Training will involve a minimum of 32 hours contact time delivered over a minimum of 4 days.

Results: Completed, Not yet completed, Withdrew, Did not show, Exemption.

2.2 Assessment

Assessment will involve a minimum of 24 hours contact time delivered over a minimum of 3 days.

Results: Pass, Defer, Fail, Not yet completed, Withdrew, Did not show.

There is no exemption from any element of the assessment.

Practical reassessments cannot take place within three months of the initial assessment to allow sufficient time for practice and preparation. All deferral reassessments must be completed within five years of the original assessment. Candidates may undertake two short reassessments after a defer result. Subsequently a full assessment must be undertaken.

3. Course delivery

3.1 Training

Course directors must hold Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor or higher plus national Mountain Training organisation requirements. Additional staff must hold Rock Climbing Development Instructor or higher plus national Mountain Training organisation requirements.

Min course size: 2, max course size: 8, max ratio: 1:4

3.2 Assessment

Course directors must hold the Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor or higher plus national Mountain Training organisation requirements. Additional staff must hold the Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor or higher plus national Mountain Training organisation requirements.

Min course size: 2, max course size: 8, max ratio: 1:4.



4. Awarding organisations

- Mountain Training Board Ireland
- Mountain Training Cymru
- Mountain Training England
- Mountain Training Scotland





Syllabus and guidance notes



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

- 1.1 Demonstrate appropriate use, care and maintenance of a wide range of commonly used trad and sport climbing equipment.



Guidance

As a Rock Climbing Development Instructor you may be asked to advise novice lead climbers, experienced climbers and other instructors. Your significant experience will support you in choosing appropriate equipment both for personal lead climbing and teaching leading to others. You should have a comprehensive understanding of, and be able to effectively use, trad and sport climbing equipment in differing environments. The nature of lead climbing presents the possibility of falling with the attendant risk of side impact and head injury. You should be fully conversant with the advantages and disadvantages of wearing a helmet while lead climbing whether indoors or outdoors.



Chapter 6 Technical essentials

2. Anchors

- 2.1 Demonstrate a variety of anchor placements appropriate to the situation.
- 2.2 Demonstrate appropriate use of commonly used in-situ climbing equipment.

Guidance

The Rock Climbing Development Instructor will be able to quickly identify anchors and gear placements. Efficiently placing runners and selecting anchors are fundamental skills for any Rock Climbing Development Instructor. You should be able to quickly evaluate in-situ placements and make a judgment regarding their reliability.

In all cases you should be able to utilise these gear placements/in-situ anchors in a safe and efficient belay system using a variety of commonly used techniques appropriate to their intended use.



Chapter 6 Technical essentials

Chapter 9 Top-rope climbing and abseiling



3. Belaying

- 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.

Guidance

Rock Climbing Development Instructors will have a comprehensive understanding of a variety of belaying techniques appropriate to different situations. You will be able to select techniques appropriately, operate them safely and effectively and clearly teach others to use them. This will include safely belaying lead climbers and teaching others to do so. You should have a comprehensive understanding of current and commonly used manual and assisted braking devices, as well as being able to choose one appropriate to the situation. Your familiarity with equipment is very important and will help to shape the way you introduce belaying techniques to aspiring lead climbers. You should have a comprehensive understanding of the different methods used to belay sport and trad lead climbers and their applicability to different situations and activities. You should be able to demonstrate each one effectively.

As a Rock Climbing Development Instructor you will be acutely aware of the risks posed by lead climbing and be able to manage them. Effective belaying will be a very important part of this management.

You should be accomplished at dynamic belaying; paying out and taking in rope in anticipation of the climber's movements. You should also be able to hold a fall in such a way so as to prevent the climber slamming against the rock/climbing wall and be able to adapt these techniques to compensate for leaders and belayers of differing weights. You should also be aware of when and where it is appropriate or not to use dynamic belaying. Belayer position and equipment choice can compromise the safety chain when a climber is leading and falling. You must be able to recognise and make others aware of the hazards and risks posed, and how to avoid them.



Chapter 9 Top-rope climbing and abseiling

Chapter 11 Trad climbing



4. Personal skills

- 4.1 Lead single pitch rock climbs of VS 4c in a safe, competent and assured manner whilst demonstrating good technique.
- 4.2 Lead single pitch sport climbs of F6a 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.

Guidance

Rock Climbing Development Instructors will be able to climb efficiently and safely on a variety of rock types demanding a range of climbing techniques. A systematic approach to rope work will avoid error. It is important to recognise that as a Rock Climbing Development Instructor you will be a role model to others. You must therefore be well within your capabilities when supporting and teaching others in order to manage risk, avoid issues and be able to give clear guidance throughout. The mandatory experience requirements to attend training and assessment respectively should be considered minimums. Experienced Rock Climbing Development Instructors will commonly have significantly more.



Chapter 11 Trad climbing

5. Background knowledge

- 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 the NICAS/NIBAS schemes.



5.4 Have an understanding of Mountain Training's climbing pathway.

Key practice points

- Practise lead belaying with a range of different devices, including assisted braking devices and consider how you would teach correct use to novices.
- Go climbing at a variety of venues and on a variety of rock types.
- Practise setting up and ascending a rope (self-lining) using an appropriate safeguarding method.





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. Planning and structure of sessions

- 6.1 Plan and structure appropriate, progressive sessions with appropriate aims and objectives.
- 6.2 Build in flexibility when planning activities responding to changing circumstances.
- 6.3 Demonstrate an awareness of responsibility to any authorising organisation, parents/guardians, group members, the group as a whole and other site users.
- 6.4 Be familiar with Mountain Training's National Guidelines and safeguarding legislation.



Guidance

It is very likely that climbers will not progress to lead climbing in one session. As a result it is very important that Rock Climbing Development Instructors can plan and deliver a series of progressive sessions that develop the skills required for lead climbing, appropriate to the people they are instructing. You should be able to differentiate your approach to aspiring sport and trad lead climbers. Sessions should be fun and engaging with a clearly defined outcome. As people develop at different rates you will need to adapt to their needs and be able to critically analyse their performance as they progress, modifying the overall plan accordingly.

Through your own experience and time spent observing others, you will be familiar with a range of exercises for teaching leading, involving both climbing and ground based activities, which you can incorporate into your session plans. These exercises should develop the competencies referred to in section 10. The wider your knowledge and range of exercises, the more likely you are to be successful in achieving your aims of teaching climbers safe and sound leading skills.

It is important that you are clear about your duty of care when teaching lead climbing, especially with regard to minors. This level of judgement will only be developed through spending time in environments where new lead climbers are being taught and are experiencing their first leads.



Chapter 11 Trad climbing

7. Organising sessions

7.1 Have an awareness of differing climbing venues and appropriate techniques to manage their use.

Guidance

You should be calm and respectful of other users of the climbing venue even if it means you have to change your plans. Often a good way to avert disruptive and potentially unsafe interference with each other's activity is to politely address them beforehand to gain an understanding of their intentions. The conditions can also significantly impact on what you can and can't do and it is important to have multiple plans in mind, in case 'Plan A' doesn't work.



Note: if you plan to teach leading in a climbing wall environment, you should be aware of and comply with the wall's arrangements and procedures with regards to users teaching lead climbing.

Key practice points

- Get into the habit of using well thought-out, timed session plans and reviewing them after the session. The participants should be encouraged to form realistic aspirations.
- Consider how you might discuss motivation and target setting with your climbers to make sure you are delivering appropriate sessions.
- Become well practised at setting up a self-lining rope and ascending it.





8. Management of participants

- 8.1 Select appropriate management techniques to safeguard all participants.
- 8.2 Identify and react to the needs of the group in order to give a safe, enjoyable and educational session.
- 8.3 Demonstrate an understanding of warming up and injury avoidance techniques.
- 8.4 Brief individuals and the group appropriately.
- 8.5 Manage differing groups undertaking diverse climbing activities.
- 8.6 Manage time appropriately in relation to the plan, activity and conditions.
- 8.7 Demonstrate an understanding of how to avoid and deal with common problems.
- 8.8 Assess an incident on a crag to determine a safe, efficient and effective solution.

9. Decision-making

- 9.1 Select a suitable venue and activities appropriate to the needs of the participants.
- 9.2 Carry out dynamic risk assessment throughout each climbing session and appropriately react to a changing environment.

10. Knowledge and demonstration of techniques

- 10.1 Effectively teach a broad range of skills and techniques appropriate to the developing novice and more experienced rock climber. This includes:
- 10.2 Teaching appropriate climbing movement to assist effective and safe lead climbing.
- 10.3 Teaching lead rock climbing in a progressive and safe manner.

Guidance

Judgement and decision making within a risk assessment framework are central to this qualification. Rock Climbing Development Instructors will have a range of techniques



through which climbers will learn and develop the skills of lead climbing; it will be up to you when, and if, they are ready to lead for real. You will use your experience to make sound, educated and informed decisions about what is right for the people you are teaching.

You have very limited control over a lead climber once they have left the ground. The whole point of a progressive, differentiated approach to teaching lead climbing is to facilitate a positive experience. Making the decision to progress onto teaching a participant to lead climb will require you to be fully confident that the fundamental basics of climbing (e.g. tying in and belaying) are well mastered and have been demonstrated in a competent manner. Avoiding 'common' problems is greatly helped if you:

- have visual contact with your team - good route choice and stance selection supports this useful positioning.
- understand that the process of skill acquisition is non-linear, requires the consolidation of skills and needs to progress from cognitive to automatic stages.
- choose a route within the lead climber's abilities so that they have the capacity to take on guidance passed to them.

Part of the process of teaching lead climbing will involve discussions around the risk assessment process. It is vital that this is brought into your progressive sessions and will require you to be crystal clear when communicating. A key issue is ensuring that participants are realistic in their understanding of risk and its mitigation. Individuals must be encouraged to remain vigilant at all times whether directly involved in the climbing activity or not.

At the lead climbing stage your 'typical' novice leader should have at least basic runner and rope work skills, a desire to lead and be fully aware of the inherent risks of lead climbing. Routes should be identified and chosen for novice lead climbers that, ideally, are well protected and easier than those they can comfortably second. By dropping a climbing grade or more, novice lead climbers can move intuitively on the rock and thus be able to devote more of their attention to the techniques of lead climbing, such as placing and evaluating protection.

Whilst deficiencies in some or all of the above can be managed by you as the instructor, the belayer must be able to belay (including holding leader falls). It is also important to consider whether the route offers sufficient learning opportunities given the time available and desired outcome. A straight crack which demands similar equipment placement throughout may not be enough for some learners.

Knowing how, who and when to call for help are crucial decisions for a Rock Climbing



Development Instructor should an incident occur. Many crags are not easily accessible from the road, which may mean an ambulance cannot assist you and you may need to engage alternative services. If assistance is required then you will need to have sufficient equipment to support the casualty until help arrives.

As a Rock Climbing Development Instructor you should be able to approach from above or below (using conventional climbing techniques) to support participants. In the majority of cases you will not need to interact with the climber in a technical way to solve problems. Despite this, on occasion, the instructor may need to interact technically to solve a problem. In these cases simple solutions are preferred, appropriate to the terrain.

Beyond these issues things become more complex and should be described as rare occurrences and are therefore classed as unforeseeable. In these circumstances external support or assistance may be required. There should be no need to use hoists or other complicated rope techniques (e.g. counterbalance abseils).



Chapter 11 Trad climbing

Chapter 13 Inspiring others





11. Personal safety

11.1 Manage personal safety whilst supervising participants progressing to and undertaking lead climbing.

Guidance

Once the novice lead climber is on the 'sharp end' of the rope, the instructor needs to be in a safe position, close to their novice lead climber to give appropriate support e.g. evaluating runner placements, coaching, reassuring, encouraging and, potentially, averting a fall. This can be done using a variety of methods but it is common to self-line using a fixed rope to do so.

You should be able to safely set up and efficiently use such as system in a variety of environments. You must be able to recognise the limitations of the system used and modify it accordingly. This may involve redirecting the rope or reducing rope stretch using additional anchors. (See Rock Climbing, Section 14: Teaching climbing.)



Chapter 11 Trad climbing

Key practice points

- Practise teaching route reading to your climbers. Get them to scope out their route and identify where they will be able to place gear/when they will clip, key holds, rests and any challenging sections.
- Don't forget to introduce backing off and down climbing as an important safety and tactical technique.
- Make sure that you have 'checked out' that the climber and belayer are confident and competent at doing the tasks/techniques you are relying on them to do unsupervised.
- Develop the ability to focus on key risk areas whilst remaining situationally aware of the wider climbing environment.



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:

12. Teaching and learning skills

- 12.1 Create and maintain a positive learning environment for all participants.
- 12.2 Communicate effectively and appropriately with a group and individuals, checking for understanding.
- 12.3 Demonstrate an ability to adapt the teaching style to meet individual needs.
- 12.4 Continue to develop positive attitudes towards climbing and lifelong participation.
- 12.5 Understand and introduce progressive activities to ensure development of appropriate knowledge, skills and experience over time.
- 12.6 Observe and analyse individual performances to provide appropriate, effective and timely feedback for participants.
- 12.7 Evaluate a session and its outcomes to inform the planning of future sessions.



Guidance

Rock Climbing Development Instructors need to quickly build an environment of trust and confidence with their climbers so that they feel ready to tackle more challenging activities with greater personal responsibility. Age, ability, individual requirements, confidence and energy levels will all influence the best approach to achieving this with each individual climber.

Well-developed communication skills are essential. The foundations of effective teaching include the ability to create rapport, communicate at an appropriate level, use positive language, provide a variety of demonstration techniques, check for understanding through skilled questioning and give useful feedback and encouragement to individuals. In addition to these well-practised communication skills your accurate observation and assessment of individuals' abilities and confidence levels will form the basis of your sessions. The progressive nature of the activities you choose will build up an individual's skills in a safe and consolidated way. Lead climbing requires many techniques to be acquired autonomously, combined and applied in a range of environments and situations. This can be challenging for the climber and therefore these techniques should be introduced progressively.

Individualised feedback significantly supports the developing climber. This may focus on technique, tactics, fitness or motivation depending upon the situation. By observing their strengths and weaknesses you can then prioritise feedback to ensure participants are safe and inspired/confident to progress further.

An effective Rock Climbing Development Instructor plans their sessions strategically, building up the skills and experiences of their students over time. The ability to review the outcomes of each session and to build upon these in the future is essential. Understanding that progress is rarely linear and that different climbers may require different strategies are key concepts at this level. You should understand how learning develops, and how this is applied to structuring activities at an appropriate level.



Chapter 13 Inspiring others

Key practice points

- Review climber profiles before meeting them and discuss their experience and goals with them when you meet them.
- Build up your climbers' skills and risk levels gradually, consolidating each phase. Be



aware of contextual interference when new environments appear to erode skill.

- Review progress with climbers and make sure they are taking on board the lessons being taught.
- Discuss next steps and provide signposting to ways ahead (beyond you if necessary).

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:

13. Access

13.1 Source current access information and act accordingly.



Guidance

As a Rock Climbing Development Instructor you have a responsibility to respect landowners' and facility managers' responsibilities, with regards to access. As a minimum, climbers should conform to recognised codes of good practice and comply with relevant access legislation, which may differ between the nations of the UK and Ireland along with local restrictions or guidelines. You should know where to access such information, such as through the relevant mountaineering council, local authority, or access organisation.

The mountaineering councils work on behalf of climbers to negotiate and secure access to crags. As a Rock Climbing Development Instructor you should inform your groups about their work.



Chapter 1 The climbing environment

14. Conservation

- 14.1 Have a broad working knowledge of the mountain environment including geology, natural history, flora and fauna.
- 14.2 Operate in such a way as to minimise impact on the environment.
- 14.3 Pass on environmental knowledge in an engaging way to educate and enthuse.
- 14.4 Manage individuals and groups so that they have minimal impact.

Guidance

General knowledge about the environment the group is visiting is always valuable. The history of the area combined with knowledge of the land use, plants and animal life can illuminate the climbing experience for the participants and initiate a lifelong interest. As an instructor you are best placed to deliver this information to novices who may be unaware of the fragile ecosystem which supports climbing as an activity.



Chapter 1 The climbing environment



15. Etiquette and ethics

- 15.1 Have a broad working knowledge of your responsibilities to the general public, other facility users, environmental agencies, local residents, landowners and the wider climbing and mountaineering community.
- 15.2 Have a broad working knowledge of local rock climbing and mountaineering ethics.

Guidance

Many climbing venues can be busy. Teaching lead climbing can be time consuming and instructors should be mindful of this, especially with regard to their choice of routes. Spending an hour or so on the most popular climb at the crag could be frustrating for other users, whilst having a queue of other climbers waiting for their 'turn' could be off putting to novice lead climbers.

Climbing wall managers have a duty of care to protect members of the public from foreseeable risks, be they climbers or spectators, and this extends to preparing codes of conduct, guidance and policies for wall users. Having a good understanding of a climbing wall's layout, route selection and overall setup will give you a greater level of knowledge from which to draw when planning a lead climbing session with clients.



Chapter 1 The climbing environment

Chapter 2 A brief history of UK and Irish climbing

Key practice points

- Research the differences in access legislation between England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
- Research the mountaineering councils' websites and publications for guidance on environmental, access and conservation information.
- Become familiar with climbing walls' age policies with regard to lead climbing and parental consent.
- Most guidebooks to crags will contain access information which should be checked before going climbing, even if it is a familiar site. This information should then be researched further online for any updates.



Appendix 1 - Definitions

Single pitch

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 and has little objective danger.
- presents no difficulties on approach or retreat, such as route finding, scrambling or navigating.

Traditional protection

Traditional protection includes equipment such as cams, hexes and nuts which are placed in cracks and weaknesses in the rock by a lead climber as they climb. The protection is then clipped to the rope using a quickdraw.

Appendix 2 - Additional information

Course delivery

Mountain Training courses are delivered by approved providers throughout the UK and Ireland.

Providers of Rock Climbing Development Instructor courses will appoint a course director for each course.

Courses can be found by searching on the Candidate Management System (CMS) <https://mt.tahdah.me> or on our website

<http://www.mountain-training.org/find/find-a-course>

Your training and assessment result will be recorded on the Candidate Management System (CMS).



Exemption from training

Experienced climbing instructors who already have substantial relevant personal experience as well as experience in teaching climbing skills and lead climbing techniques may apply for exemption from training. To qualify for exemption candidates must, at the very least, meet the minimum experience requirements for attendance at an assessment course.

They should also have at least two years recent experience of teaching climbing on the crags of the UK and Ireland.

Further details of the exemption process can be found on the Mountain Training website.

There is no exemption from assessment.

Further experience

Once you have passed the Rock Climbing Development Instructor assessment you are responsible for remaining current and up to date with good practice for as long as you are using your qualification. Mountain Training would like to encourage you to regularly dedicate some time to your development both as a climber and as a Rock Climbing Development Instructor.

The Mountain Training Association (MTA) is a membership association designed to support both trainee and qualified candidates by providing access to developmental workshops, conferences and peer learning events among other member benefits.

The responsibility for ensuring that leaders receive refresher training must lie with the provider of the service, or the individual in the case of self-employed leaders.

Mountain Training publishes a digital document called the National Guidelines which provides advice on good practice for anyone with a responsibility for climbing, walking and mountaineering related activities, and encompassing the principles of safety management.



Our association is a membership organisation that can help you as you work towards one of our qualifications.

As a membership association we are building a community of confident and expert leaders, instructors and coaches, that we hope you will join.

We can help you with:

- Big savings on clothing and equipment
- A wide range of accredited development workshops, events and opportunities for continuing personal/professional development
- Specialist mentoring for your qualification
- Regional networks and opportunities to build connections with others in the sector
- The Professional Mountaineer magazine offering advice, tips and guidance from experts and peers within the profession
- Specially negotiated rates for liability insurance for qualified members

Anyone can join from the moment they register for a Mountain Training qualification, and can join anytime when working towards a qualification or when qualified.

Join via your account on the Mountain Training Candidate Management System (Tahdah – CMS).

“The workshops I’ve done have been brilliant and have definitely made me a better leader” Alex, Association member.

“The Association offers an excellent range of CPD, which has given me a broader understanding of the role, skills and expertise required to be a great leader. Definitely recommend.” Charlie, Association member.