

**Indoor Climbing Assistant**

**Skills checklist**

**Introduction**

This skills checklist is designed to enable you, as an Indoor Climbing Assistant candidate, to reflect on the syllabus topics covered in the online training course and to rate yourself using the ‘learning stage’ described below.

It is hoped that this process will then assist you in preparing for assessment by highlighting areas requiring further development.

When reflecting you might find it useful to refer back to the Camping Leader handbook. In addition the Mountain Training publication – “Hill Walking” – details many of the techniques that might be used by a Camping Leader and will be useful for refreshing your memory of specific techniques or skills covered in the online training course.

**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 Camping Leader.

**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 practised to reinforce the motor and cognitive programmes.

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| **Technical Competence** |
| Indoor Climbing Assistants will be able to identify, fit and demonstrate use of the basic climbing equipment required by individuals for a climbing session. When assisting a qualified instructor in fitting climbing equipment to participants and providing technical support during climbing sessions, they will be able to: |
| **1. Equipment** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 1.1 Name and understand the use of basic climbing equipment.  |  |  |
| 1.2 Fit basic climbing equipment.  |  |  |
| 1.3 Demonstrate an ability to evaluate the condition of basic climbing equipment. |  |  |

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| **2. Belaying** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 2.1 Tie into the rope. Attach group members to the rope with and without a karabiner.  |  |  |
| 2.2 Demonstrate the use of different belay systems set up by the supervising instructor.  |  |  |
| 2.3 Use different belay techniques/devices.  |  |  |
| 2.4 Bottom rope belay a climber competently, hold falls and control lowers.  |  |  |
| 2.5 While out of the rope system, assist a belayer to take in, hold a fall and control a lower. |  |  |

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| **3. Personal skills** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 3.1 Demonstrate evidence of ongoing access to climbing walls for personal use.  |  |  |
| 3.2 Understand the importance of centre of gravity in climbing movement. |  |  |

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| **4. Background knowledge** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 4.1 Describe and use common terminology\* for climbing.  |  |  |
| 4.2 Describe the role and philosophy of Mountain Training and its schemes, the mountaineering councils, climbing clubs and the NICAS schemes.  |  |  |
| 4.3 Describe the basic concept of grading. |  |  |

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| **Management and decision-making** |
| Indoor Climbing Assistants should be able to support qualified climbing instructors and coaches with the organisation, planning, management and delivery of their sessions. They should be able to: |
| **1. Assistant responsibilities** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 5.1 Assist an instructor in liaising with climbing walls, parents, group members and organisations.  |  |  |
| 5.2 Demonstrate an awareness of environmental hazards and other site users.  |  |  |
| 5.3 Describe their duty of care in relation to assisting, including safeguarding issues specific to supervising young people and vulnerable adults. |  |  |

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| **6. Leadership and decision-making** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 6.1 Demonstrate good conscientious behaviours for arrival, activity and departure. |  |  |
| 6.2 With support from the supervising instructor, demonstrate adaptable leadership behaviours and decision-making.  |  |  |
| 6.2.1 Monitor the group, environmental conditions and activity, and can adapt their behaviours and decisions to meet ongoing safety, group and task requirements.  |  |  |
| 6.2.2 Be consistent and confident in their decision making to achieve positive outcomes and communicate these clearly to the group. |  |  |

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| **7. Knowledge and demonstration of techniques** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 7.1 Under direction, deliver technical instruction to individuals and the group including:  |  |  |
| 7.1.1 Fitting of suitable harnesses.  |  |  |
| 7.1.2 Attaching the rope to the harness.  |  |  |
| 7.1.3 Effective belaying.  |  |  |
| 7.2 Under direction, manage a basic safe warm up session.  |  |  |
| 7.3 Under direction, supervise one bottom roping party, providing back up where appropriate.  |  |  |
| 7.4 Under direction, assist in the safe supervision of bouldering activities with groups (including spotting where appropriate). |  |  |

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| **8. Hazards and emergency procedures** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 8.1 Avoid common problems when assisting supervising a roped party.  |  |  |
| 8.2 Demonstrate an awareness of fall zones, lower off zones and trip hazards. |  |  |

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| **9. Working with other staff** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 9.1 Describe their role and responsibilities in supporting a qualified instructor.  |  |  |
| 9.2 Communicate effectively with a qualified instructor. |  |  |

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| **Teaching and learning skills** |
| Indoor Climbing Assistants will often need to give tuition and support to a range of climbers. They should be able to: |
| 10. Teaching and learning | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 10.1 Assist a qualified instructor in maintaining a positive learning environment for all participants.  |  |  |
| 10.2 Communicate effectively and appropriately both with a group and individuals. |  |  |

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| **The climbing environment** |
| Indoor Climbing Assistants should be familiar with the indoor climbing wall environment, both small and large scale (commercial) venues. They should be able to: |
| **11. Etiquette and ethics** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 11.1 Demonstrate an awareness of the impact the group they are with may have upon other site users. |  |  |

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| **Indoor Climbing Assistant****ACTION PLAN** |
| Can you put on a harness and fit it safely?  |  |
| Can you tie into a harness correctly using either a rethreaded figure of eight knot with a minimum 10cm tail or a bowline (single or double) with a stopper knot? |  |
| Can you belay, lower and secure a falling climbing safely using a belay device?  |  |
| Can you check that your climbing partner has put on their harness and tied in properly? |  |
| List three syllabus areas that you feel/think particularly confident or practised in. |  |
| List three syllabus areas that you feel/think require further practice. |  |
| What opportunities can you foresee for gaining experience to develop your Indoor Climbing Assistant skillset? |  |
| Given your answers to the above briefly outline your way forward for becoming an Indoor Climbing Assistant. |  |