

**Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor**

**Skills Checklist**

**Introduction**

This skills checklist is designed to enable you, as a Mountaineering and Climbing 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 Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor candidate handbook. In addition, the Mountain Training publication – “Rock Climbing” – details many of the techniques that might be used by a Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor 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 Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor.

**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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| **Personal Skills** |
| Personal skills are the foundation of an effective Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor. Developing these skills through a breadth of experience that has been gained in a variety of environments and terrain is essential. This allows you to move efficiently, have an ability to assess risk, look after others, be an inspirational role model and demonstrate good practice. |
| **1. Personal Skills** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 1.1. Choose and lead multi-pitch rock climbs at a minimum of VS 4c in a safe, competent and assured manner. |  |  |
| 1.2. Demonstrate practical and theoretical currency in a wide range of mountaineering/rock climbing techniques and skills. |  |  |
| 1.3. Navigate with speed and efficiency in all conditions. |  |  |
| 1.4 Demonstrate efficient movement over all types of mountain terrain. |  |  |
| 1.5 Assess an incident on a crag or mountain to determine a safe, efficient and effective solution |  |  |
| 1.6 Apply a variety of problem-solving and improvised-rescue techniques using normal climbing equipment, to include abseiling, lowering, hoisting, escaping from the system and prusiking. |  |  |
| 1.7 Demonstrate effective communication, leadership, instruction and teaching. |  |  |
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| **2. Teaching and Learning Skills** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 2.1. Communicate effectively and appropriately with individuals in a range of situations, checking forunderstanding. |  |  |
| 2.2 Actively appraise and manage session delivery, maximising both lifelong learning and experienceopportunities for participant(s). |  |  |
| 2.3 Understand and utilise a variety of suitable learning and teaching strategies to ensure development of appropriate knowledge, skills and experience over time. |  |  |
| 2.4 Observe and analyse individual performances to provide appropriate, effective and timely feedback for participants. |  |  |
| 2.5 Evaluate a session and its outcomes to inform the planning of future sessions. |  |  |
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| **3. Summer Mountaineering Instruction** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 3.1. Effectively teach and lead a variety of mountain-related activities, skills and techniques to participants, who range from novice to committed hill walker, scrambler and rock climber. |  |  |
| 3.2 Demonstrate appropriate care and leadership of a party on scrambling terrain including the use of various rope techniques in ascent and descent. |  |  |
| 3.3 Demonstrate suitable choice of venue and route taking into account the ability and aspirations of the party and the likely weather and conditions. |  |  |
| 3.4 Effectively present mountain-related topics, promoting learning and encouraging discussion. |  |  |
| 3.5 Teach and demonstrate all aspects of hill and mountain navigation. |  |  |
| 3.6 Structure, plan and run a variety of indoor technical sessions for both novice and experienced climbers. |  |  |
| 3.7 Assess the ability of the participant(s) or group in order to give a safe, enjoyable and educational mountain journey. |  |  |
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| **4. Rock Climbing Instruction** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 4.1 Prepare and organise an instructional session appropriate to the needs of the participant(s). |  |  |
| 4.2 Assess the ability of the participant(s) in order to deliver a safe, appropriate, enjoyable and educational day. |  |  |
| 4.3 Effectively teach a broad range of skills, developing novice to committed and experienced participant(s). |  |  |
| 4.4 Select suitable venues, routes and activities appropriate to the needs of the participant(s). |  |  |
| 4.5 Actively appraise and manage session delivery, maximising the learning and experience opportunities for participant(s). |  |  |
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| **5. Mountain Training** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 5.1 Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the role, philosophy and structure of Mountain Training and its schemes, the mountaineering councils, climbing clubs and the National Indoor Climbing/ Bouldering Award Scheme. |  |  |
| 5.2 Demonstrate the ability to instruct and supervise aspects of Mountain Training’s walking and climbing skills and qualification courses. |  |  |
| 5.3 Demonstrate a generic understanding of the standards required for all the above qualifications and suitable methods to train and assess for them. |  |  |
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| **6. The Mountain Environment** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 6.1 Source current access information and act accordingly. |  |  |
| 6.2 Have a broad working knowledge of the mountain environment including geology, natural history, flora and fauna. |  |  |
| 6.3 Operate in such a way as to minimise impact on the environment. |  |  |
| 6.4 Pass on environmental knowledge in an appropriate and engaging way to educate and enthuse. |  |  |
| 6.5 Manage individuals and groups so that they have minimal impact and leave the crags and mountainsin an improved condition where possible. |  |  |
| 6.7 Demonstrate a broad working knowledge of your responsibilities to the general public, other users,environmental agencies, local residents, landowners and the wider climbing and mountaineering community. |  |  |
| 6.8 Demonstrate a broad working knowledge of local and national rock climbing and mountaineeringethics |  |  |
| 6.9 Operate a flexible and imaginative programme of activities so as to accommodate other users where possible |  |  |
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| **7. Development and History of Mountaineering and Rock Climbing** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 7.1 Demonstrate a broad knowledge of mountaineering and rock climbing history and ethics. |  |  |
| 7.2 Demonstrate knowledge of a wide range of mountain literature including instructional books, guidebooks, biographies and online material. |  |  |
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| **8. Assessment of Risk and it’s Application** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 8.1 Demonstrate an awareness of responsibility to any authorising organisation, parents/guardians, the participant(s), Mountain Training and others. |  |  |
| 8.2 Carry out dynamic risk assessments and evaluate the needs and requirements of individuals and groups to ensure a suitable level of adventure, risk and safety. |  |  |
| 8.3 Be familiar with Mountain Training’s National Guidelines as well as the implications of current relevant legislation and accreditation/inspection regimes.  |  |  |
| 8.4 Understand the Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor’s role as a technical advisor. |  |  |
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**Appendix:**

**Assessment requirements**

The period between training and assessment varies in length for each person and it is recommended you allow a minimum of twelve months. Consolidation is an opportunity to develop your skills, paying particular attention to any weaknesses identified during the training course. You can use the excuse ‘I’m preparing for assessment’ to have as many mountain adventures as you like, so get out there and explore this beautiful country of ours! The minimum DLOG experience that needs to be gained during the consolidation period is listed below, but it should be noted that most successful candidates will have far in excess of this. In addition, they will have a robust and realistic action plan that ensures no aspects of the syllabus are forgotten. Many candidates will also seek the support of a mentor, or look for opportunities to shadow experienced Mountaineering and Climbing Instructors. By joining the Association of Mountaineering Instructors there is also access to workshops and a community of practice.

The **minimum** requirements during this period are:

* 20 quality mountain days as a leader in sole charge of a mixed ability group.
* 20 rock climbing teaching days with students.
* 20 multi-pitch climbs at VS 4c or above, a large proportion of which should be on mountain crags and major

sea cliffs

* Familiarity with all aspects of the syllabus
* A valid first aid certificate

The Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor assessment is 5 days long.

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| **Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor** **ACTION PLAN** |
| What is the timescale for doing your assessment? |  |
| How many multi-pitch rock climbs have you led? The minimum requirement is for 20 at VS 4c or above since training. A large proportion should be on mountain crags and major sea cliffs. |  |
| How many sport climbs at 6a or above have you completed? Although there is not a requirement to log more sport climbs, it is an effective way to hone your climbing technique.  |  |
| How many quality mountain days as a leader in sole charge of a mixed ability group have you completed? At assessment you must have a minimum of 20 days since training. |  |
| How many teaching multi-pitch rock climbing days have you completed? At assessment you must have a minimum of 20 days since training.  |  |
| List the three syllabus areas that you feel most confident in. |  |
| List three syllabus areas that you feel require further practice. |  |
| What opportunities can you foresee for gaining experience to develop your Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor skillset? |  |
| Given your answers to the above briefly outline your way forward for becoming a Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor, including workshops, additional courses, shadowing and mentoring. |  |