

**Climbing Wall Development Instructor**

**Skills checklist**

**Introduction**

This skills checklist is designed to enable you, as a Climbing Wall 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 Climbing Wall Development Instructor Handbook. In addition the Mountain Training publication – “Rock Climbing” – details many of the techniques that might be used by a Climbing Wall 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 Climbing Wall Development 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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| Climbing Wall Development Instructors are candidates with independent personal experience who have already gained the Climbing Wall Instructor (previously known as the Climbing Wall Award) or the Rock Climbing Instructor (previously known as the Single Pitch Award). Awareness of the skills outlined in these qualification syllabi is assumed and not repeated here. |
| **Technical competence** |
| Climbing Wall Development Instructors will have a sound knowledge of lead climbing on fixed protection on climbing walls and artificial structures. They will be able to identify and evaluate commonly used indoor climbing equipment and demonstrate its use to individuals during a lead climbing session. They will be personally competent in a range of indoor lead climbing techniques and be able to provide clear demonstration and effective tuition when teaching novice climbers to lead on fixed protection. They will be able to: |
| **1 Equipment** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 1.1 Select and fit suitable climbing equipment for personal and client use when leading routes. |  |  |
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| **2 Belaying** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 2.1 Demonstrate a range of belaying techniques appropriate for lead climbing. |  |  |
| 2.2 Demonstrate the skills of a competent lead belayer including holding falls and controlling lowers. |  |  |
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| **3 Personal climbing skills** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 3.1 Choose and lead routes at French 6a in a safe, competent and assured manner, using good technique. |  |  |
| 3.2 Demonstrate ability to take leader falls in a controlled manner. |  |  |
| 3.3 Demonstrate an understanding of the safety chain and fall factors with relevance to lead climbing. |  |  |
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| **Management and decision-making** |
| Climbing Wall Development Instructors should be able to independently organise, plan, manage and deliver safe, and progressive, learning-to-lead climbing sessions to novice climbers. They should be able to: |
| **4. Instructor responsibilities** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 4.1 Explain their general responsibilities to the climber(s) and, where appropriate, to parents/guardians, the organising authority, committee or manager of the activity, facility management and users, local residents and the general public. |  |  |
| 4.2 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. |  |  |
| 4.3 Demonstrate an understanding of current legislation and the legal responsibilities that relate to the duty of care to individuals and climber(s) under their charge, including safeguarding issues specific to supervising young people and vulnerable adults. |  |  |
| 4.4 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. |  |  |
| 4.5 Describe how to access national guidance on instructor responsibilities and good practice. |  |  |
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| **5. Leadership and decision-making**  | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 5.1 The leader demonstrates adaptable leadership behaviours and decision-making |  |  |
| 5.1.1 Monitor the climber(s), 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. |  |  |
| 5.1.2 Be consistent and confident in their decision-making to achieve positive outcomes and communicate these clearly to the climber(s). |  |  |
| 5.2 VISION – The leader is a positive role model and aims to inspire others. |  |  |
| 5.2.1 Articulate clear and agreed values for their climber(s), lead by example and behave how they want the climber(s) to behave. |  |  |
| 5.3 SUPPORT – The leader creates a positive and supportive environment for the climber(s). |  |  |
| 5.3.1 Recognise, respect and adapt to individual needs, differences, strengths and abilities. |  |  |
| 5.3.2 Encourage independent learning; establish an environment where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities and provide clear and positive feedback to support this. |  |  |
| 5.4 CHALLENGE – The leader provides relevant and appropriately challenging experiences. |  |  |
| 5.4.1 Agree climber goals and calibrate the level of challenge to individual abilities and motivations. |  |  |
| 5.4.2 Encourage and support the climber(s) to be part of the decision-making process and encourage them to overcome their own challenges. |  |  |
| 5.5 The leader understands the Mountain Training ethos of leadership and has developed their own. They should be able to: |  |  |
| 5.5.1 Articulate their own leadership ethos and beliefs along with those of Mountain Training. |  |  |
| 5.5.2 Acknowledge and describe a range of leadership approaches, models and associated ethos. |  |  |
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|  **6. Knowledge and demonstration of techniques** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 6.1. Deliver technical instruction to individuals and the group including: |  |  |
| 6.1.1 Effective lead belaying |  |  |
| 6.1.2 The principles of appropriate route choice |  |  |
| 6.1.3 Use of leader-placed and in-situ quick draws |  |  |
| 6.1.4 Effective communication between leader and belayer |  |  |
| 6.1.5 Falling and holding a fall |  |  |
| 6.1.6 Lowering to the ground. |  |  |
| 6.2. Teach and demonstrate basic lead climbing skills. |  |  |
| 6.3. Demonstrate the use of appropriate climbing and non-climbing activities to develop lead climbing techniques. |  |  |
| 6.4. Supervise climbers belaying and leading. |  |  |
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| **7. Hazards and emergency procedures**  |  |  |
| 7.1 Identify appropriate and inappropriate areas of a wall to teach lead climbing and other associated skills. |  |  |
| 7.2 Demonstrate an awareness of the hazards presented to other wall users by lead climbers and act in a way to keep these minimised. |  |  |
| 7.3 Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate warming up and injury avoidance techniques for lead climbers. |  |  |
| 7.4 Avoid common lead climbing problems. |  |  |
| 7.5 Solve common lead climbing problems if they occur |  |  |
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| **Teaching and learning skills** |
| Climbing Wall Development Instructors need to give tuition and support to novice climbers who are learning and developing their lead climbing skills. They should be able to: |
| **8. Teaching and Learning skills** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 8.1 Demonstrate an ability to adapt the teaching style to meet individual needs. |  |  |
| 8.2 Design and implement a plan to introduce progressive activities to ensure development of appropriate knowledge, skills and experience over time. |  |  |
| 8.3 Observe and analyse individual performances to provide appropriate, effective and timely feedback for participants. |  |  |
| 8.4 Evaluate a session and its outcomes for the climber(s) to inform the planning of future sessions. |  |  |
| 8.5 Facilitate a review of their own performance in relation to the session to identify the lessons learned and inform the planning of future sessions. |  |  |
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| **The climbing environment - access** **and etiquette and ethics** |
| Climbing Wall Development Instructors should be informed and experienced in the indoor climbing wall environment, including both small and large scale (commercial) venues. They should be able to:  |
| **9. Etiquette and ethics** | **Learning stage** | **Notes** |
| 9.1 Operate a flexible programme of activities to accommodate other facility users. |  |  |
| 9.2 Describe the site-specific requirements and agreements relating to teaching leading on different climbing walls and artificial structures. |  |  |
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**Appendix:**

**Assessment requirements**

Before you book onto a Climbing Wall Development Instructor assessment, make sure you have done the following:

* You must have attended a Climbing Wall Development Instructor training course.
* You must be familiar with the syllabus.
* You must have logged a minimum of 100 different lead climbs, at least half of which must be a grade of French 6a or above at 3 different major climbing walls.
* You must have assisted or observed at least 5 teaching leading sessions delivered by a suitably qualified person. These 5 sessions must have personal reflective comments recorded on DLOG.
* You must have physically attended and completed (i.e. not online) a first aid course which involved at least one full day or eight hours of instruction and included an element of assessment.

The Climbing Wall Development Instructor assessment is a minimum of 6 hours.

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| A black and grey sign  Description automatically generated**Climbing Wall Development Instructor** **Action plan** |
| What is the timescale for doing your assessment? |  |
| Have you logged a minimum of 100 different lead climbs, at least half of which must be a grade of French 6a or above at 3 different major climbing walls? |  |
| Have you assisted or observed at least 5 teaching leading sessions delivered by a suitably qualified person? Do these 5 sessions have personal reflective comments recorded on DLOG |  |
| 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 Climbing Wall Development Instructor skillset? |  |
| Given your answers to the above briefly outline your way forward for becoming a Climbing Wall Development Instructor holder? |  |