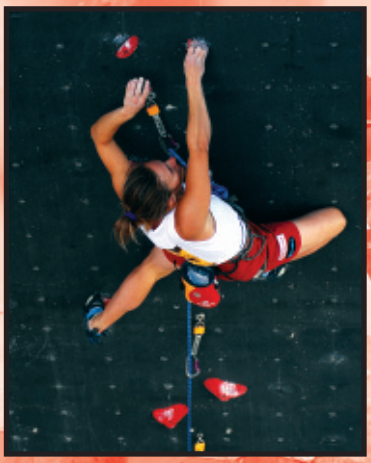
Climbing Wall Award Handbook



For those who wish to supervise climbing activities on indoor or outdoor climbing walls and structures in the United Kingdom.

Participation Statement

Mountain Leader Training (MLT) 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. MLT has developed a range of training and assessment schemes and associated supporting literature to help leaders manage these risks and to enable new participants to have positive experiences while learning about their responsibilities.

Acknowledgements

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Preface

Nowadays it is common to begin rock climbing on artificial climbing walls, and there are even many regular climbers who rarely or never venture onto natural crags. The accessibility, the relatively defined nature and the less serious atmosphere often mean that such facilities are ideal for beginners and are popular places to introduce others to climbing. Artificial walls can allow a high level of performance to be developed, and both indoor and outdoor venues are now available for novices not only to start climbing but also to participate, train and climb throughout the year.

The number of organised groups enjoying rock climbing and abseiling on artificial climbing walls has risen over many years. Mountain Leader Training (MLTUK and the home nation Training Boards: MLTE, MLTNI, MLTS and MLTW) is concerned to ensure that high standards of supervision are maintained, so that both enjoyment and safety are enhanced without compromising either the sport or the participation of others. High standards are achieved through experience, personal qualities, training and validation.

This handbook provides advice for anyone involved in taking groups to artificial climbing walls and particularly for candidates working their way through the Climbing Wall Award (CWA) scheme. It is designed to support the knowledge and experience of candidates, trainers and assessors without prescribing methods. There are many technical manuals, developed by climbers, which will continue to illustrate evolving techniques and these notes are designed to complement such literature.

The booklet is divided into four parts:

- Prospectus that explains the way you progress through the Climbing Wall Award scheme from registration to assessment.
- Syllabus that lists the skills of a climbing wall session supervisor.
- Guidance Notes that help advise candidates and their trainers and assessors of protocols and procedures.
- Appendices that provide background information.

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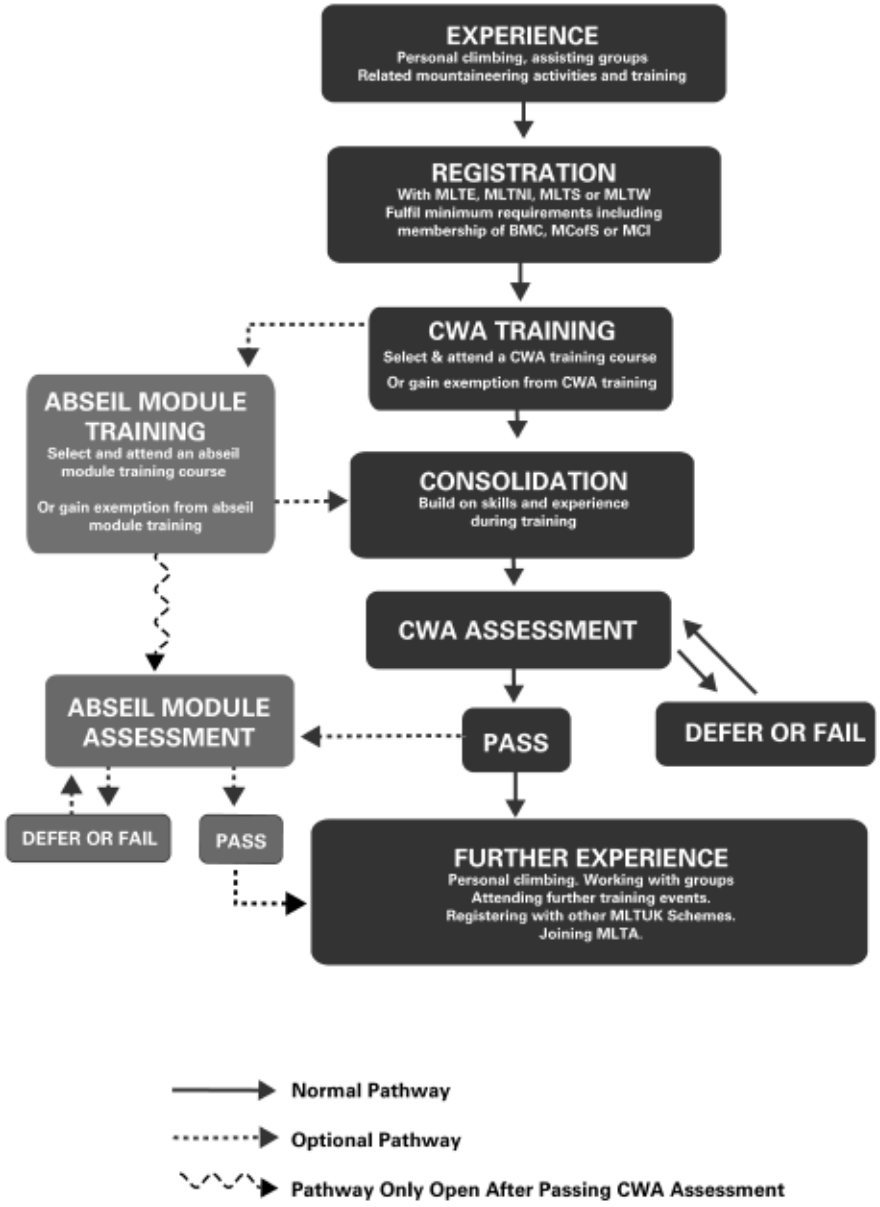
Progression through the CWA Scheme



Experience Requirements

Please consider the advice given below. You should note that the figures given are absolute minimums and most successful candidates will have well in excess of the experience outlined:

- To be involved in the CWA scheme you need to be a climber and have an interest in the supervision of novices in the activity. A minimum of six months personal climbing experience is required. [1]

- Before attending a training course you must first register with one of the four home nation Mountain Leader Training Boards. They will provide you with a logbook and enter your personal details on the national database.

- Before attending a training course you must have climbed on artificial walls on at least fifteen occasions, visited at least three different walls and successfully led climbs on walls. Without having done at least this amount of climbing you are unlikely to play a constructive part on the course or be able to make best use of the training.

- Between training and assessment you must consolidate new ideas and techniques and gain additional climbing experience. Your trainer will advise you about the amount and nature of the personal climbing and supervising experience you should gain.

- Candidates should not present themselves for assessment until they have:
  1. led a minimum of forty climbs. [1]
  2. assisted with the supervision of climbing for at least fifteen sessions at a variety of facilities.

[1] Note: outdoor experience is not essential (but beneficial) for this award

Photo: Alex Messenger

1 Introduction

1.1 The number of individuals who are introduced to climbing on an artificial structure has expanded enormously in recent years. Mountain Leader Training UK (MLTUK) and its constituent home nation Training Boards (MLTE, MLTS, MLTW and MLTNI - **hereafter referred to as MLT**), in consultation with many interested parties, have devised the Climbing Wall Award to seek to ensure that high standards of supervision are maintained, safety techniques are inculcated and that participants may be coached in such a way that both enjoyment and safety are enhanced whilst personal abilities are developed. High standards of supervision and organisation are best achieved through breadth of experience, personal qualities, quality training and rigorous validation.

2 Remit

2.1 The scheme is for climbers who are in a position of responsibility when supervising climbing activities on indoor or outdoor climbing walls, artificial boulders and towers. This includes a wide range of structures utilised for these activities which will be referred to throughout these introductory notes as 'walls'. It is primarily concerned with ensuring good practice, leading to the safe enjoyment of climbing activities, and to an understanding of the sport. It covers the supervision and management of activities such as bouldering, the teaching of basic movement skills and roped climbing, excluding the teaching of leading.

2.2 Completion of a training course alone, without passing the assessment course, should not be considered as a qualification in itself, although it will be of considerable personal benefit to the trainee.

2.3 An additional module is available for those candidates who wish to supervise abseiling and top-roping activities on those walls which have top access.

2.4 This scheme has been designed to provide a level of basic competence for those who are in a position of responsibility during climbing activities at walls. Whilst the award does include a measure of personal competence it is not designed as a personal proficiency programme, and it should not be used as either an entry requirement or a measure of suitability for individuals who wish to climb on climbing walls.

2.5 It is valid throughout the UK.

2.6 For the purposes of this scheme, a climbing wall is:
- An artificial structure, designed for the purpose of being used for climbing activities (this includes towers, artificial boulders and mobile climbing walls)
- Indoors or outdoors
- A structure which has safety equipment such as top anchors in place and is maintained through a management regime

2.7 It is the duty of the employer or organising authority to decide whether a leader possesses the personal attributes needed to take responsibility for the appropriate care and management of participants and for ensuring that Child Protection requirements are met. It is the combination of technical skills, breadth of experience and personal qualities that form the basis for effective supervision. This scheme assesses the technical skills and experience; the employer or organising authority must gauge the personal qualities.

2.8 It will be the responsibility of the employer or organising authority to develop management strategies if wishing to deploy Award Holders beyond the scope of this scheme.

2.9 The scheme does not cover:
- The rock-climbing skills needed to climb and/or supervise others on natural crags (these are covered in the Single Pitch Award scheme)
- Multi-pitch rock climbing skills
- The teaching or supervision of leading
- The use of leader-placed protection
- The supervision of high or low ropes courses
- The supervision of ice climbing walls, including dry tooling
- The assessment of candidates' personal qualities
- A Criminal Records Bureau check

2.10 *If you are in doubt about a particular venue, the appropriate people to approach for advice are qualified Mountaineering Instructors (MIA or MIC) or British Mountain Guides. The officers of Mountain Leader Training may also be consulted for advice.*

3 Stages in the Climbing Wall Award Scheme

Progression through the Climbing Wall Award scheme is composed of:

3.1 Membership of a Mountaineering Council (British Mountaineering Council, Mountaineering Council of Scotland or the Mountaineering Council of Ireland) or an affiliated mountaineering or climbing club.

3.2 Registration with the appropriate home nation Mountain Leader Training Board. You can join the appropriate Mountaineering Council at a discounted rate as part of the registration process if not already affiliated. You will be issued with a personal logbook and associated guidance notes.

3.3 Fulfilling experience requirements for attendance on training.

3.4 Attending a training course of a minimum of twelve hours direct contact time.

3.5 Undertaking a consolidation period between training and assessment. [2]

3.6 Attending and passing an assessment course of a minimum of six hours duration.

3.7 Continuing experience which is entered in the logbook.

4 Stages in the Abseiling Module

Should candidates wish to undertake the Abseiling module they must:

4.1 Have completed the CWA scheme training in 3.4 prior to attending the abseil module training.

4.2 Attend a further training course of four hours direct contact time. [3]

4.3 Undertake a further consolidation period. [4]

4.4 Have successfully completed the CWA scheme assessment in 3.6 prior to attending assessment for the abseil module.

4.5 Attend and pass a minimum two-hour assessment course.

5 Registration

Candidates wishing to register with the Award must:

5.1 Have a genuine interest in climbing and the supervision of groups on climbing walls.

5.2 Have at least six months experience of using a variety of climbing walls.

5.3 Be not less than seventeen years of age at the date of registration. Candidates may undertake training after their seventeenth birthday but may not attend an assessment course until after their eighteenth birthday.

[2] This consolidation is highly recommended for all but the most experienced of candidates

[3] Providers with access to suitable facilities may well run the two courses concurrently.

[4] See Prospectus 8.1

5.4 Be an individual or club member (of an affiliated club) of a Mountaineering Council.
5.5 Candidates should allow fifteen working days for their application for registration to be processed and returned.

5.6 On receipt of the registration form and appropriate fee, MLT will issue a logbook. Candidates' personal details will be recorded and progression through the scheme will be detailed on the MLTUK Database.

6 Training

6.1 Before attending a training course, candidates must be registered with the Climbing Wall Award (CWA) (see section 5 above). They must be seventeen years of age or older at the time of registration and before attendance on a training course (see section 5.3). Candidates must have at least six months climbing experience and have climbed at three different walls on at least fifteen different occasions; this must include at least one major public wall. They must have led routes on walls. They should have an understanding of the wider sport of climbing and ideally have climbed outdoors.

6.2 Training courses are run by approved Providers (full list available from MLT) and will involve a minimum of twelve hours contact time for the Climbing Wall Award. Contact time for the Abseiling module is a minimum of four hours. Training courses will be run with a minimum of four candidates and a maximum of twelve. The minimum staffing ratio is one trainer to six candidates. Larger courses have several benefits: the varied experience of the candidates enables an interchange of ideas, enables individuals to see how their own skills compare with others and they will also benefit from the opinion of two trainers.

6.3 The training course is for potential group supervisors and assumes basic competence as a climber with experience of leading routes (see Experience Requirements). It will emphasise those skills which candidates might have difficulty in learning without expert guidance. A few minor aspects of the syllabus may not be covered during the training course and candidates are expected to deal with these items themselves.

6.4 The Director of Training will give verbal feedback to each candidate and will endorse the training course report page of the logbook with comments about the programme, walls used and situations encountered. Candidates will receive individual recommendations for the consolidation period. The training course does not involve any written reports concerning the performance or standard of candidates. An approved sticker will be put on the endorsement page of the logbook by the Director of Training and will show the date and Course Provider number specific to your trainer. The trainer is obliged to submit a report to MLT containing all registered candidates' details within a limited time of the course end. Should candidates not have presented their registration details by that time then their attendance on the training course will not be entered on the database of candidate records.

6.5 Candidates are encouraged to use the skills checklist provided in their logbook to evaluate their current skills and to plan, with their trainers, their particular route towards assessment.

7 Logbook

7.1 Experience gained by candidates must be recorded in the logbook. Entries should be concise, easily read and should include all rock-climbing and other relevant experience.

7.2 The logbook is divided into five sections:

- Personal details, contents and endorsement pages
- Course reports and personal profile
- Personal and group-leading experience
- Experience requirements, definitions, sample pages and skills checklist
- Additional training information

7.3 The logbook is designed to help candidates demonstrate previous experience to others. Candidates must fill it in before a training course to enable trainers to discuss particular needs and to agree the areas of the syllabus on which candidates need to concentrate before presenting themselves for assessment. Few of us can remember every time we have gone climbing or visited a climbing wall, but this is no reason to avoid using the logbook. Candidates should list a variety of experiences gained and give details of the most notable sessions. The information given does not have to be verified by a third party but will form the basis for discussion at training and assessment.

8 Consolidation Period

8.1 Candidates will generally see new ideas and techniques during training and will therefore need some time to practise and evaluate these before taking the assessment. During this period of consolidation, candidates are advised to climb at as wide a range of venues as possible, both as an individual and when assisting with the supervision of others. MLT recommends that all but the most experienced candidates allow a *minimum of three months* between training and assessment. There is currently no time limit on the validity of a training course and some candidates may take several years to complete the award.

9 Assessment

9.1 Before attending an assessment course, candidates must:

- Have registered with one of the Boards for the CWA scheme
- Be at least eighteen years of age prior to attendance on an assessment course
- Have attended a training course or been granted exemption from training and have a relevant training page in their logbook
- Have gained the relevant further experience (see Experience Requirements)
- Be proficient in the use of a wide variety of climbing walls
- Have recorded a minimum of thirty visits to at least three different climbing walls
- Additionally have assisted a qualified[5] supervisor on at least fifteen instructed sessions on at least two different walls including a large public facility in a variety of contexts
- Hold a valid first aid certificate (see section 12)

[5] i.e. technically competent according to HSE guidelines.

9.2 For an Abseiling module assessment candidates must already have:

- Passed the Climbing Wall Award assessment
- Completed the Abseiling module training process or been granted exemption from training and have a relevant training page in their logbook.

9.3 During the assessment course, candidates will be tested in accordance with the syllabus requirements. Assessments are run by MLT approved Providers.

9.4 The minimum contact time for those undertaking the Climbing Wall Award assessment is six hours; minimum contact time for the Abseiling module assessment is two hours. Assessors work on a minimum ratio of one assessor to four candidates. The overall course size may range from two candidates to eight. Larger courses can have some benefits, allowing for a wider interchange of ideas and experience which may provide individuals with better opportunities for comparing skills. On larger courses each candidate will receive the opinion of two assessors.

9.5 The Director of Assessment will endorse the logbook in one of three ways:

Pass: where satisfactory knowledge and application of the syllabus and the necessary experience, skills, knowledge and attributes were demonstrated.

Defer: where the performance was generally up to standard but complete proficiency was not attained in some aspects of the syllabus. Some form of re-assessment will be required. Where an appropriate first aid qualification is not produced the candidate will be deferred until such time as they can produce a current, acceptable first aid certificate.

Fail: where the performance has been generally weak, or the necessary experience and attributes have not been shown. Further training may be recommended before another complete assessment is taken.

9.6 In all cases the result will be discussed with candidates and recorded in their logbook (the report page is inserted by the Course Provider/Director). Candidates who are deferred or failed will receive specific written feedback, including an action plan. This will include the reasons for the result, recommendations on the additional experience needed and details of the timing and format for subsequent re-assessment.

9.7 In considering the decision of the assessors, candidates are asked to listen to all elements of the final interview and wherever possible to raise any concerns at that time. If, on reflection, the discussion and the written report do not fit your impression of the assessment and your performance, then contact the Course Provider/Director for additional clarification, in writing if necessary.

9.8 In the case of a deferral, candidates are encouraged to return to the original assessment Provider but can be re-assessed by any Provider approved by Mountain Leader Training. Practical CWA re-assessments cannot take place within three months of the initial assessment. All deferrals must be completed within five years of the original assessment. Only two re-assessments are permitted before having to take the entire assessment again.

10 Exemption

10.1 Experienced climbers who already have substantial personal climbing experience and experience of supervising groups on climbing walls may apply to MLT to be exempted from attendance at a training course. There is no exemption from assessment.

10.2 Before applying for exemption, candidates must consider the following points:

- The training course is not a personal skills climbing course. It introduces candidates to the skills necessary for supervising novices on climbing walls
- It includes material that might be unfamiliar to even experienced climbers.

10.3 Candidates applying for exemption must:

- Be registered with the scheme
- Complete an exemption application form
- Submit a copy of the completed logbook experience pages with the exemption application form and fee to MLT

10.4 Exemption application forms and details of fees are available on request from MLT.

11 Equal Opportunities

11.1 Mountain Leader Training is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all participants in climbing and mountaineering. Candidates, trainers and assessors should express a positive attitude towards equal opportunities and act as positive role models.

12 First Aid Requirements

12.1 For any leader, first aid is an essential skill and the CWA assessment requires a current first aid qualification. The minimum requirement is that such a course must involve at least eight hours of instruction, include an element of assessment and cover basic life support and emergency aid. It is the responsibility of award holders and/or their employers to evaluate their likely work and the type of situations that they can reasonably expect to encounter and to maintain current appropriate first aid training and qualifications.

13 Complaints and Appeals Procedure

13.1 The CWA scheme is subject to continual monitoring, culminating in a formal review once every four years. Candidates with feedback on their courses are encouraged to submit written comments to the Provider or to their Board.

13.2 If for any reason you find it necessary to complain about an aspect of your training or assessment then you should contact the Course Provider or the relevant officer within Mountain Leader Training.

13.3 If candidates feel that aspects of their assessment were unfair they should:

- Make contact with the Course Provider, explain their concerns and seek clarification.
- If this does not resolve their concerns, they should contact the Secretary of their Mountain Leader Training Board for advice and for details of the appeals procedure. The decision of the Board will be final.

Syllabus

Photo: Entre-Prises

1 TECHNICAL COMPETENCE

Candidates must demonstrate competence in the following areas. They should be able to:

1.1 Equipment

a. Identify equipment suitable for personal and group use at any given climbing wall
b. Demonstrate an ability to evaluate the condition of equipment and ensure appropriate care and maintenance
c. Demonstrate the ability to use climbing wall equipment appropriately
d. Demonstrate an understanding of the use and limitations of different types of surface, hold, safety mats and anchors
e. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the safety chain

1.2 Belaying

a. Connect self and others to the rope
b. Attach self and others to the belay system
c. Demonstrate the use of direct and indirect belays
d. Use a variety of different belay techniques/devices competently and choose the most appropriate for a given situation
e. Set up bottom-rope systems and choose the most appropriate system for a given situation
f. Hold falls and lowers
g. Supervise others belaying

1.3 Personal Climbing Skills

a. Choose and lead routes suited to personal ability[6]
b. Move with confidence on appropriate routes and boulder problems

[6] See Guidance Notes for information about minimum technical standard (Grade 4)

1.4 Background Knowledge

Demonstrate an understanding of:

a. The history, traditions and ethics of UK rock climbing
b. The home nation Training Boards and MLTUK
c. The club system and the Mountaineering Councils
d. The development of climbing walls in the UK
e. Competition climbing
f Grading systems

2 THE CLIMBING WALL ENVIRONMENT

Candidates must demonstrate competence in the following areas. They must be able to:

2.1 Using Climbing Walls

a. Interpret and use effectively the information given at walls and through other sources of information
b. Show an awareness of both general and locally important rules and regulations, and demonstrate an ability to obtain and comply with this information
c. Demonstrate evidence of ongoing access to climbing walls for personal use

2.2 Etiquette

a. Demonstrate an awareness of responsibilities to the general public, including other facility users and the wider climbing community
b. Operate a flexible programme of activities in order to accommodate other site users or other specific considerations (e.g. maintenance operations)
c. Be aware of the hazards presented to other site users by the actions of a group, and act in such a way that these are minimised
d. Demonstrate an awareness of the site-specific requirements and agreements relating to different climbing walls and artificial structures

3 SUPERVISION

Candidates must demonstrate competence in the following areas. They must be able to:

3.1 Planning

a. Plan both individual sessions and programmes of activities
b. Assess the abilities and objectives of the group participating in this plan
c. Check the underlying aims and objectives of the event
d. Demonstrate an awareness of responsibility to any authorising organisation, parents, individual group members, the group as a whole and other site users
e. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of weather on climbing, if appropriate
f. Have built in flexibility when planning activities in order to respond to changing circumstances
g. Know where to find and use basic first aid equipment in the case of an accident or injury and know how to call for expert help if necessary
h. Be aware of and comply with current legislation regarding children and vulnerable persons

3.2 Organising

a. Brief individuals and the group appropriately
b. Issue appropriate rock climbing equipment and check correct fitting and use
c. Store equipment appropriately after each session

3.3 Managing

a. Know a range of appropriate group management strategies and techniques and use them effectively
b. Demonstrate the safe and responsible management of all group members irrespective of whether or not they are directly involved in the climbing activity
c. Demonstrate an understanding of how to avoid common problems, such as a stuck climber, and how to deal with them should they occur
d. Manage the individuals and the group effectively by:
    - Good communication skills
    - Setting and reviewing targets. Identifying and reacting to the needs of the group in relation to involvement, interest, enjoyment and achievement
    - Supervise a group belaying
    - Supervise a group bouldering
e. Manage time appropriately in relation to the plan, activity and conditions

For roped climbing:

Deliver technical instruction to individuals and the group including:

f. Choice and fitting of suitable harnesses
g. Attaching the rope to the harness
h. Demonstration of effective use of chosen belay device

3.4 Movement Skills

a. Demonstrate an understanding of warming up and injury avoidance techniques
b. Demonstrate the use of bouldering activities with groups, including using appropriate games and activities, including setting simple boulder problems
c. Advise, demonstrate and coach participants in basic climbing movement skills
d. Be able to aid the development of climbing movement skills over a period of time
e. Understand the dangers of overtraining for different age groups
f. Understand the needs of those with physical and mental disabilities and medical conditions

4 ABSEILING MODULE

Candidates must demonstrate competence in the following areas. They should be able to:

4.1 Equipment

a. Identify equipment suitable for top-roping and abseiling at any given climbing wall
b. Demonstrate an ability to evaluate the condition of abseiling equipment and ensure appropriate care and maintenance
c. Demonstrate the ability to use abseiling equipment appropriately

4.2 Belaying

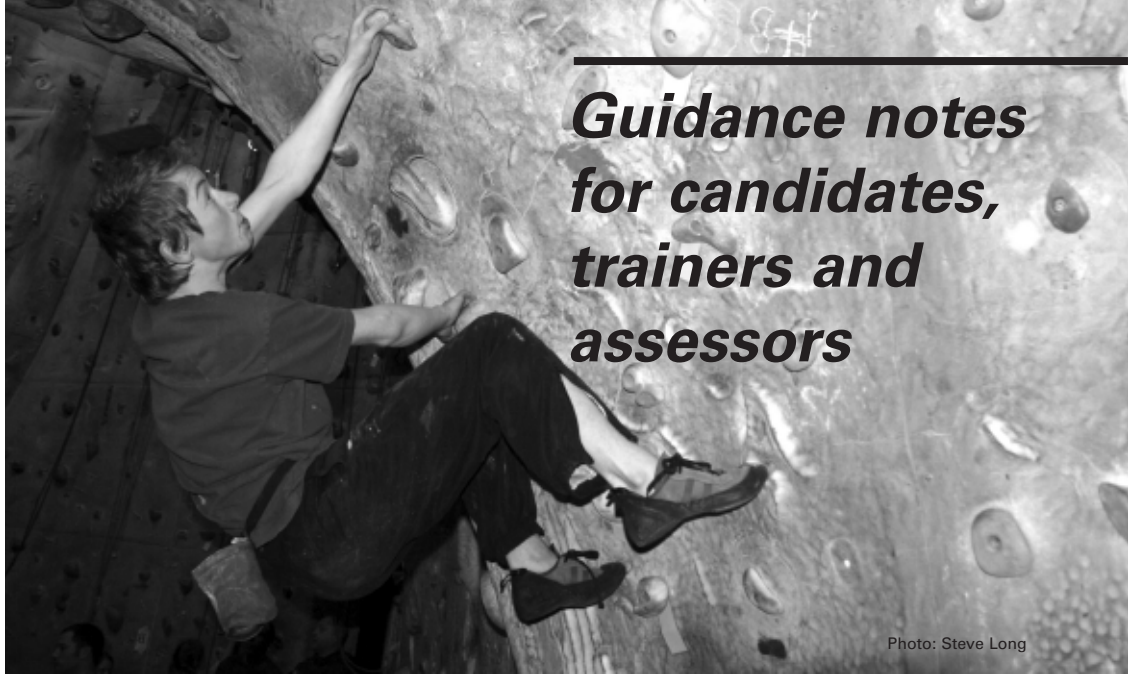
a. Connect self and others to the rope
b. Utilise belay systems at the top of a climbing wall
c. Attach self and others to the belay system and abseil ropes
d. Demonstrate the use of belay techniques
e. Use a variety of different belay techniques/devices competently and choose the most appropriate for a given situation
f. Set up top-rope systems and choose the most appropriate system for a given situation
g. Hold falls and lowers
h. Manage the safety of those arriving at the top of a wall
i. Be aware of potential common problems and how to avoid them.
j. Demonstrate an understanding of how to deal with common problems if they occur

4.3 Abseiling

a. Utilise belay points for both abseil and safety ropes
b. Attach participants to both abseil rope and safety rope
c. Be aware of potential common problems and their solutions
d. Be aware of techniques for managing the safety of participants at the top of walls
e. Abseil without requiring a back-up safety rope

4.4 Management of Groups Accessing the Tops of Walls

a. Evaluate risk to participants when accessing the top of walls
b. Select appropriate management techniques to safeguard participants and supervisor(s)



Guidance notes for candidates, trainers and assessors

Photo: Steve Long

These guidance notes should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the syllabus and are designed to assist in both training and assessment by emphasising approaches to, and interpretation of, aspects of the syllabus. Candidates, trainers and assessors should read the complete guidance and not only the notes specific to them. In this way a fuller understanding of the CWA can be gained.

CWA courses take place at a variety of walls, all with their associated hazards. Therefore courses are for candidates with independent personal experience. Whilst trainers and assessors will endeavour to maintain a safe working environment, candidates also have a duty to exercise judgement and care regarding personal safety and the safety of other group members.

The success of any course, whether training or assessment, depends upon the contributions made by all involved. It is essential that candidates have the required levels of personal experience and that course staff are active wall users who are up to date with current good practice. There are often many safe and effective approaches to any particular task at a specific wall, and the breadth of experience brought to the course by each person will contribute to the range of learning opportunities.

Throughout this guidance the term 'wall' is used to describe a wide range of purpose-built climbing and bouldering venues. A fuller description of the range of walls that award holders may work in is described in Section 2, The Climbing Wall Environment.

Candidates

Mountain Leader Training awards are based on the premise that leaders, supervisors, instructors and coaches require personal experience first, before developing the skills and

techniques to work with groups. For this reason, there are minimum requirements for candidates prior to both training and assessment. Candidates should be aware that if they attend a training course without having achieved these requirements they will not be in a position to benefit fully from the techniques and skills presented to them. Attendance on an assessment course without meeting the minimum requirements can lead to automatic deferral or failure.

Candidates should have experience of a range of climbing walls in order to understand both techniques taught at training and tasks they are given at assessment. Candidates should feel free to ask simple questions since they are often the most pertinent, and it is a good idea to make a record of topics and techniques covered at training, to help develop skills afterwards. Candidates should also feel free to ask questions at assessment, as a clear understanding of tasks and contexts is vital to a satisfactory outcome.

The wider the range of personal experience the more the candidate will be able to understand the contents of the course and be able to contribute to discussions. Whilst the training course will cover as much variety as possible, candidates should seek out personal experience at a variety of walls and on natural cliffs where possible.

As with all Mountain Leader Training awards, the CWA is a logbook award. Candidates should view their logbook as a CV of their work, keeping it up to date as they gain experience, both before and after assessment. This allows potential employers to appreciate the range of work undertaken by an award holder and evaluate the currency of their experience. Candidates should also seek further training to support them in their work, where appropriate. The Mountain Leader Training Association – www.mlta.co.uk – administers continuing professional development courses for award holders.

Trainers

Trainers should assist candidates in acquiring a broad range of responses to tasks and guide them towards assessment through a variety of delivery styles and situations. Trainers should try to structure their courses in order to match the particular skill profile of any group of candidates and with regard to any individual needs. Training should concentrate on those skills and techniques that candidates may have difficulty learning and practising during their everyday personal climbing. At the end of the course trainers should talk with candidates individually to evaluate current levels of experience and knowledge in order to develop an action plan. Candidates should complete training with a clear idea of what development is required prior to assessment.

Overall, training should be framed as a forum for developing the skills and techniques to manage climbing and bouldering groups in a variety of situations and should not be seen solely as a means of guiding candidates towards assessment.

Assessors

Assessors will use the logbook to evaluate the experience of a candidate. However, experience cannot be measured simply in terms of the length of time a candidate has been

climbing. With a minimum of six months wall-climbing experience pre-training it is expected that candidates will have made in excess of thirty visits to three different walls, including a large public facility, by the time they present themselves for assessment. On these visits candidates should have engaged in both bouldering and roped climbing and led routes at Fr 4 grade or above.

In addition to this independent personal climbing experience, a potential award holder should gain experience assisting with the supervision of novices climbing. This should comprise at least fifteen sessions and ideally include experience with young people as well as adults. Without this grounding in the reality of supervising a variety of groups, candidates may lack the experience to deal with a variety of situations.

Assessors should evaluate the performance of the candidate against the requirements of the syllabus. The assessment course should be conducted in a manner that gives all candidates the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability in realistic conditions. Assessors must ensure that all assessment tasks are fully understood by candidates and should seek to be clear and unambiguous in task setting. Candidates should be given sufficient opportunity to perform the required task.

It is important to remember that there may be a variety of possible solutions to any task, and assessors should look for a safe and appropriate response to the task set rather than any particular technique. Assessors should seek to assess the performance of candidates in a variety of contexts both in terms of environment used and also the range of techniques applied. Assessors must provide feedback to candidates and should explain how this will be given. A realistic and objective assessment of each individual candidate has to be made against the nationally recognised standard.

1. Technical Competence

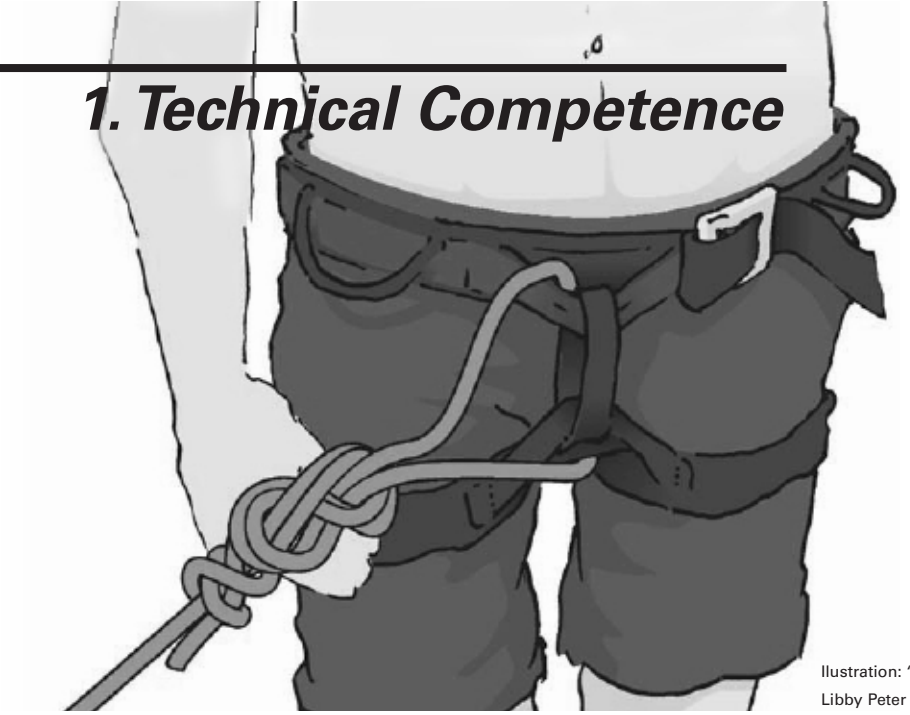


Illustration: 'Rock Climbing'
Libby Peter - MLTUK

The CWA syllabus does not define a prescribed set of techniques; rather it describes a range of skills with which candidates should be familiar. It is likely that training courses will be run as a series of open discussion workshops – taking advantage of the experience of trainers and trainees. Assessments should allow for a possible range of responses to any given situation.

Candidates

1.1 – 1.2 Equipment, Anchors and Belaying

The CWA syllabus is based on the assumption that candidates have experience of bouldering and roped climbing at a variety of walls, including leading climbs and belaying other climbers. The emphasis on a training course will be to provide opportunities to share ideas and refine techniques.

Candidates should be aware of the range of equipment suitable for use by novices as well as that for personal climbing use. It would be expected that a CWA holder could offer advice on choice and suitability of equipment, as well as having a reasonable knowledge of its care, maintenance and life expectancy. In addition to being able to offer advice on the selection and use of equipment, candidates should be aware of sources of information, including current publications and materials produced by the Mountaineering Councils.

The maintenance of fixed safety equipment such as anchor points, extenders and in-situ bottom ropes is the responsibility of the climbing wall, not of its users. Candidates should be aware of the most common means by which such equipment wears out or can become damaged through extended use and be capable of basic visual inspection to detect obvious problems.

There is an expectation that candidates will be familiar and competent with basic skills such as harness fitting, tying on and belaying.

A variety of group belaying methods are commonly used at climbing walls. These include the use of direct and indirect belays, and peer belaying, where group members belay each other. The choice and management of appropriate methods and equipment is an important skill, which will be discussed throughout training and assessment.

1.3 – 1.4 Personal Climbing Skills and Background Knowledge

A sound knowledge and experience of using climbing walls is fundamental to the CWA scheme. The CWA assumes at least six months experience of using walls prior to registration and is therefore not a basic skills course but a refinement of the techniques of personal climbing and an extension into the skills associated with supervising climbers. Candidates must have led routes at a climbing wall prior to attending a training course. The CWA is a UK-wide award and it is important that candidates are confident about climbing at unfamiliar walls by the time they approach assessment.

The three Mountaineering Councils are not governing bodies that impose rules but representative bodies that work on behalf of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers. At the point of registration on the CWA scheme candidates must be current members of a Mountaineering Council or a club affiliated to one. This ensures contact with organisations that helped devise the award and conduct work on behalf of the whole climbing community.

Candidates may not themselves have experience of climbing outside, but they may play a pivotal role in introducing novices to the sport of climbing. Therefore, candidates are expected to be aware of current issues in climbing through access to Mountaineering Council information and by reading the climbing press or appropriate websites.

Trainers

An integrated approach to the syllabus should be adopted, with issues such as group management and movement skills considered throughout the course rather than as isolated modules. Candidates will come with differing amounts of skill and experience, and a training course should reflect these variations. What may be appropriate for one set of trainees may not be so for another, even though all are at a suitable level to attend training. The course should be pitched at an appropriate level for each candidate where possible.

1.1 – 1.2 Equipment, Anchors and Belaying

A training course offers the opportunity for candidates to extend their experience, and this particularly applies to the use of equipment. It is expected that equipment brought by both candidates and trainer will be used to illustrate appropriate use.

Candidates should be exposed to a wide variety of belay devices and belaying techniques during training. Emphasis should be placed upon the choice of equipment and methods appropriate for different groups. The introduction and supervision of peer-belaying techniques should be covered.

Essential considerations should include the following:

Harnesses
As well as ensuring that candidates are aware of good practice with their own harnesses, the appropriate use of a variety of others should be included within a training course. Consideration should be given to the occasions when a full-body harness might be used.

Helmets
Candidates should be made aware that helmet-use guidelines for supervised groups vary between walls and organisations. Helmets should be discussed, including situations where there may be good reasons for not wearing one, such as climbing with auto-belay devices.

Tying on
The harness manufacturer's recommended method of tying on to the rope should be encouraged for personal climbing. The differences in appropriate attachment for different harnesses should be illustrated. Common errors, such as waist belts and leg loops incorrectly aligned, should be highlighted to enable candidates to spot incorrect fitting and attachment.

Top and Bottom Ropes
Top-roping is not covered within the core syllabus of the CWA scheme and need only be discussed to make clear the distinction between the two methods. To avoid confusion, it should be explained to candidates that the words 'top' and 'bottom' refer to the position of the belayer, not the anchor.

Top-roping describes a situation whereby the belayer is positioned at the top of the wall, with the rope going down from the belayer to the climber.

Bottom-roping describes a situation whereby the belayer is positioned at the foot of the wall, with the rope going from the belayer through a top anchor and back down to the climber.

The availability of bottom ropes varies from wall to wall. Some walls have none available and provide no top access to anchors. Large public walls commonly have a range of bottom ropes in situ. Careful venue choice should allow trainers to demonstrate a range of bottom-rope situations, including use of varied anchors and safety considerations when setting ropes up. Specific considerations for bottom-roping slabs, and vertical and overhanging climbs should be covered.

Anchors
All wall users undertaking roped climbing rely upon fixed anchors. There are many types of top-anchor arrangements normally, but not always, using two independent fixings. A common top-anchor design consists of two independent bolts linked by a chain to a central point, such as a closed steel ring, to which a screwgate and a snapgate karabiner are attached. The rope is then passed through both karabiners. Some walls have dual top-anchor systems, allowing both lead climbing and bottom-roping to occur on the same route without having to remove in-situ ropes. Some walls may have only single top anchors, such as a ring bolt cemented into a wall, while occasionally the anchor may be provided by a steel bar that the rope is threaded around. Ideally a variety of anchor types should be available at the training course locations, as this is an important discussion point.

Trainers should make candidates aware that there is no legal requirement that a particular style of top anchor be used. Trainers may have their own opinions on top-anchor design, but they should not prejudice candidates into thinking that one design is 'safe' and another

'unsafe'. Rather, advantages and disadvantages can be discussed and, where possible, wall staff can be valuably incorporated into a discussion on why a certain design has been chosen.

Belay Systems
A direct belay is one in which the load on a rope is passed directly to the anchors without passing through the belayer. Direct anchors are commonly used when the belayer is light or when the belayer wishes to operate at a distance from the anchors/belay device.

Not all walls provide load-bearing ground anchors that can be used directly. Providers should seek to use facilities where their use can be demonstrated and the appropriate use of such equipment should be discussed.

The usual method of belaying at a wall involves a belay device being connected to the belayer's harness. For situations where the belayer is considerably lighter than the climber, some walls provide heavy sandbags to attach to the belayer's harness. When available, the correct use of such equipment should be covered practically. When unavailable, alternatives (e.g. weighted rucksack) can be used to illustrate use and promote discussion.

Trainers should choose venues allowing the practical use of at least one type of equipment – such as sandbags or ground anchors – or create illustrative examples. Simply discussing both types of equipment, with no practical demonstrations, will not allow candidates to appreciate their correct use. Some discussion of alternative methods allowing light belayers to operate with heavier climbers may also be included.

Belay Techniques
With a wide variety of belay devices and techniques commonly used, a training course should enable candidates to evaluate their use and any pros and cons. In this way they can choose what is appropriate for a given situation. Trainers should ensure that a variety of devices are available and candidates should be encouraged to experiment with new devices under the guidance of a trainer. Trainers may have their own preferred techniques and devices, but a balanced view should be presented, allowing candidates to come to their own conclusions.

Factors affecting a belayer's ability to hold a fall include the type of belay device, the weight of the climber, the diameter and slickness of the rope, the gripping strength of the belayer and any other factors which create friction in the system. The positioning of the belay device and the belayer relative to the expected direction of pull should be considered.

There is commonly much less friction in the rope system at artificial walls than when climbing on natural crags. Systems which can be used to create friction at the top anchor, along with their associated benefits and disadvantages, should be covered.

Trainers should spend time discussing the supervision of peer belaying. CWA holders could manage a range of climbing sessions, from one-off introductions with novices to long-term programmes where belaying is taught as a fundamental climbing skill. Both could include peer belaying with different levels of supervision, even within a single session. A range of peer-belaying methods should be demonstrated, and candidates should appreciate the hazards associated with this belaying style.

Trainers should impress upon candidates that wall staff may not wish certain belaying techniques to be used, with possible embarrassment for the person supervising should they be asked to change their practices. The importance of consulting with wall staff should be highlighted.

Falls and Lowers
This element of the syllabus should be practised only in the most controlled situations. Holding a fall when bottom-roping should be included in a training course. In effect, this should amount to no more than taking the weight of a climber, as good belay technique would result in a fall being arrested before the climber has gained momentum. This provides an opportunity to illustrate the importance of good belay technique and belayer positioning, and should be performed under careful supervision.

As candidates have led climbs indoors, they should have the skills, ability and experience to hold a falling leader safely even though it is not tested on the course. Candidates should also have an awareness and understanding of the problems and difficulties that can be associated with belaying a leader.

1.3 – 1.4 Personal Climbing Skills and Background Knowledge

Route Choice
Judgement as to the suitability of a climb is as significant for one's own enjoyment as it is for the enjoyment of novices being introduced to climbing. The selection of a suitable route is a process of combining information at a wall with personal observation. Training courses should build in opportunities for candidates to choose routes and climb them.

Fr 4 Climbs
Candidates should not feel under pressure to climb at a particular grade other than that at which they feel comfortable on a training course. It is more important for them to have gained broad experience of climbing than to have developed an ability to climb harder routes.

However, venue choice may dictate that candidates are required to climb at Fr 4 grade or above during a training course. The ability to climb confidently at this grade is required prior to assessment and trainers should ensure that candidates are fully aware of the additional climbing experience they may need to gain between training and assessment.

Leading Climbs
Candidates should lead a graded climb during a training course. This allows trainers to give feedback and guidance, and provides an opportunity to discuss the following issues: belayer position, clipping quick-draws (including climber's body position, back-clipping and z-clipping), clipping top anchors, leading a route to set up a separate bottom rope, climbing calls and lowering a climber. Movement skills can also be discussed.

The Safety Chain
The basic principle of keeping the number of links in a belay system to the minimum should be explained. The advantage of minimising unnecessary links in a system, such as attaching to a ground anchor with the rope instead of slings, should be discussed.

History and Ethics
Climbing is not defined by a set of rules but by an unwritten code of conduct that is the result of the actions of climbers themselves. Although the code of conduct is based on the history

and traditions of climbing it is also liable to change as techniques, equipment and aspirations evolve. Candidates may not have climbed outside but a CWA holder will introduce novices who may go on to climb on natural crags themselves.

Clubs and Mountaineering Councils
Climbing clubs can provide effective means of participating in the sport. CWA holders should be able to advise a newcomer on how to contact local clubs and to explain some of the associated benefits.

The representative role of the Mountaineering Councils should be discussed and the work they undertake on behalf of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers, highlighted. Candidates should be made aware of good-practice climbing-wall resources provided by the Mountaineering Councils, such as posters, booklets, leaflets and signage.

Assessors

1.1 – 1.2 Equipment, Anchors and Belaying

A candidate is expected to provide sufficient personal equipment for the assessment and be aware of its appropriate use. Assessors may choose to provide a range of equipment for candidates to use in addition to that which they bring themselves. It is usual for an assessment course to contain an element of training. Once the needs of the assessment have been met, assessors may create an opportunity to extend, as well as to assess, the knowledge of candidates in relation to suitable equipment for group use.

Bottom Ropes
Large public access walls with in-situ bottom ropes should be chosen for assessment. However, candidates may work at venues requiring them to set up bottom ropes themselves. Candidates should be aware of issues related to setting up bottom ropes, especially with regard to their own safety and the correct threading of top anchors.

Belaying
Assessors will often choose to assess this most fundamental aspect of climbing technique by observing the candidate rock climbing with a peer. As some belaying of lead climbers may well take place on an assessment course, assessors should assure themselves of the ability of candidates to undertake this competently.

It is common for groups to peer belay at climbing walls. Candidates should be able to demonstrate appropriate peer-belaying systems and be aware of the issues regarding the management of such groups.

1.3 – 1.4 Personal Climbing Skills and Background Knowledge

The candidate will commonly be given a free choice of routes on which to demonstrate competence. Route selection using information at a wall or by a visual assessment of the route can reveal much about the experience of the candidate.

Leading Climbs
Candidates should have recorded the leading of Fr 4 grade climbs in their logbooks. The ability of the award holder to lead climbs at Fr 4 or above is a fundamental requirement of the scheme, as leading a climb requires many of the skills of a competent supervisor.

Candidates are expected to lead a graded climb during an assessment course, demonstrating fluency and confident, competent climbing skills.

Leading can be used to evaluate the ability of a candidate and to stress the significance of personal involvement in the sport, from which safe systems for supervising novices will flow naturally.

The Safety Chain
An understanding of basic principles relating to safe and efficient links in a belay system is important. It is usual for this to be evaluated during the practical elements of a course and to be extended through questioning.

History and Ethics
Candidates may have no experience of climbing on natural cliffs but could play a pivotal role in introducing others to climbing. Candidates should appreciate important issues regarding climbing outside, such as access and conservation, and should be aware of the work undertaken by the Mountaineering Councils within Britain and Ireland. Candidates should also be aware of climbing-wall resources produced by the Mountaineering Councils, which may be of benefit to them in their work.

2. The Climbing Wall Environment

Photo: Entre-Prises

A wide range of climbing facilities already exists and, with construction methods continually evolving, new styles may appear in the future. Existing provision includes: beginner walls, free-standing boulders, bouldering walls, traversing walls, leading walls, climbing towers, competition walls and adventure walls (walls including ropeways, tunnels or other features). Many climbing facilities include more than one of these elements - a leading or bouldering wall could also be a competition wall, for example.

Walls can be temporary or permanent, can be indoors and outdoors, and either occupy dedicated areas or share facilities with other activities.

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 for wall users. It is important for those working with groups to make themselves aware of such codes and to be considerate of other wall users. Award holders may themselves be instrumental in drawing up such codes for the facilities where they work.

Candidates

2.1 Using Climbing Walls

Walls have become justifiably popular climbing venues for supervised groups, as they offer a wide variety of climbing and bouldering opportunities. Whether introducing novices through 'taster sessions' or providing long-term programmes such as children's clubs, the versatility of walls is one of their attractions.

However, as with other sport facilities, walls are managed environments with user

guidelines, some of which may apply to groups. For example, those responsible for a group may be required to produce specific documentation before commencing their session. Candidates must be aware of common regulations associated with group use of walls and know how to access relevant information. The CWA does not include the skills and techniques of wall management and maintenance. However, some award holders may find themselves as the sole supervisor of a private facility, such as a school wall, and be in a position where they have to also manage a wall. Where appropriate, candidates should be aware of how to obtain relevant outside expertise to help deal with such issues.

As with all purpose-built sport facilities, those designed for climbing can suffer wear or become damaged. It is rare for a climbing wall to 'fail' structurally in any way, such as a hold breaking off, and climbing wall users are not responsible for wall maintenance. However, candidates should make themselves familiar with the chain of responsibility for the maintenance of the walls they use, so that they know how to report any concerns they may have.

Some climbing facilities may be open access and free to use - such as a purpose-built boulder in a public park - some may be housed in dedicated buildings and others may be located at the end of a sports hall, sharing space with other activities. Candidates should make themselves aware of how this variety can affect the way in which groups use facilities.

Candidates should understand the range of grades used at walls: the French grading system for roped climbs, the V and Font grading system for boulder problems and the less commonly used traditional grading system. Just as when using a wall for personal climbing, the selection of appropriate climbs and boulder problems is a vital skill when working with groups.

Prior to training, candidates will have climbed at a variety of walls and should be aware of commonly used registration systems.

2.2 Etiquette

Those working with groups need to have a sympathetic understanding of the needs of other climbers and groups. Unless specific arrangements have been made, all wall users have an equal right to use the facility, and candidates need to adopt a flexible approach to their work. Candidates should be conscious that inappropriate group management could impact upon the enjoyment and safety of other climbers and spectators.

Trainers

2.1 Using Climbing Walls

At least two climbing facilities will be visited during a training course, and trainers will be mindful of the rules or regulations applying to the venues chosen. Discussing the source of such information, and any implications for the conduct of the training course, allows candidates to appreciate issues they need to consider in their own work.

It may be beneficial to ask a member of wall staff to provide input on the group use of their facility. Including wall management within course delivery can help paint pictures of the issues of which candidates need to be aware.

Candidates should be made aware of the large variety of indoor and outdoor climbing facilities available, along with the various ways in which these facilities are managed. A benefit of visiting two distinctly different facilities during a training course is that issues regarding wall use can be covered practically. A purpose-built climbing boulder in a public park is very different from a large public facility in a dedicated building, for example. Each presents very different considerations regarding its use.

Some candidates may work predominantly at private facilities, such as a school wall, and end up in a position where they are effectively managing a facility, as well as supervising groups using it. The CWA does not include wall management or maintenance within its syllabus and, where appropriate, trainers should advise candidates on how they may access either further training or external expertise to help in such circumstances.

2.2 Etiquette

Climbing at walls commonly means that users are operating in close proximity to each other. It will be valuable to discuss group-management strategies that maximise involvement and minimise the extent to which a group spreads out.

Candidates should be made aware of the following good practice which can be demonstrated practically throughout a training course: moving around the wall - instead of repeatedly climbing the same route or boulder problem - and working in small groups. Unless specific arrangements have been made, all wall users have an equal right to climb or boulder the same routes or problems. No one group or individual should take over an area for an extended period of time.

Trainers should make clear that etiquette refers to the way in which wall users respect each other's needs. Etiquette has important implications for safety. For example, matting may be fixed or moveable in bouldering areas. In the latter case, great care should be taken to ensure that there is a common understanding about who is using the mat and where it is positioned.

Assessors

2.1 Using Climbing Walls

Candidates should demonstrate an awareness of common issues relating to the group use of walls. Not all climbing facilities are managed in the same way; therefore, it is most important that candidates are aware of sources of relevant information and prepared to meet common requirements.

Evaluation of the attitudes and actions of candidates relating to climbing-wall use should carry equal weighting to their practical performance. Assessors should employ a variety of techniques to evaluate candidate's knowledge, such as discussion topics, scrutiny of the logbook, observation during all stages of the practical course and direct questioning as issues present themselves.

It is likely that only one facility will be visited during an assessment course; this should be a large public wall offering both roped climbing and bouldering. Assessors should satisfy themselves that candidates display sufficient knowledge to use all varieties of artificial climbing venues, be they inside or outside.

2.2 Etiquette

Groups under instruction at a climbing wall are often very visible to other climbers and spectators. Assessors must be confident that candidates can operate in a suitably sensitive way so as to avoid conflict between their group activities and the interests of others.

Effective organisation of a session requires good planning, and this in turn requires a clear understanding of the objectives. Candidates must develop an awareness of how variables such as the abilities and motivation of the individuals, the characteristics of different venues and the weather (for outside walls) may all have an impact on the effectiveness of the session. It is often the case that the quality of the experience for participants may suffer if these factors are not recognised. The ability to change plans to suit differing circumstances is fundamental to any successful session.

Photo: West Yorkshire Scouts

3. Supervision

The CWA syllabus does not prescribe ways in which climbing groups should be supervised. Different groups require different approaches, depending upon the aims of the session and the experience of group members. The CWA is delivered within peer groups to allow candidates, trainers and assessors to recount their own experiences, discuss issues and cover a range of delivery styles practically.

The first three sections of this part of the syllabus can be seen as a continuum of skills required to prepare and execute a climbing session and should not just be seen as discrete skills used to complete specific tasks. Planning includes tasks that are completed before meeting with a group. Organising describes the way in which group members are properly equipped and informed before, during and after a climbing session. Managing encompasses many of the skills and techniques for supervising a climbing session.

Candidates

Candidates may have no supervision experience at training, but by the time they reach assessment will have assisted on at least fifteen instructional sessions.

3.1 Planning

When planning a session candidates should consider the implications of factors such as the group's experience and expectations, the venue, authorising organisations (where applicable) and other wall users. Groups may use walls for a one-off session or a long-term programme, and candidates should be aware of possible implications this will have upon the way in which an individual session is planned and executed.

Within a climbing wall there is often a great range of roped climbing and bouldering varying

in difficulty, steepness and height. Planning encompasses consideration of the type of climbing that may be most appropriate for a group. Only by developing a wide range of personal climbing-wall experience will a candidate be able to plan an effective group session.

3.2 Organising

Group members should be issued with suitable equipment and through clear briefings be made aware of its appropriate use and how they should behave during a climbing session. A badly organised group may be a danger not only to themselves but also to other wall users.

3.3 Managing

Candidates need to develop a range of group management strategies. Even within the same group there is likely to be a range of personal ability and motivation, and working with each group member as an individual is challenging for even the most experienced supervisor.

Clear communication is the basis of good management and effective group work. Making the group aware of hazards associated with climbing and bouldering and getting them involved in the management of these risks engenders an atmosphere where all group members feel actively involved.

Managing group members whilst climbing should be seen as only one element of supervision, as it is the management of group members not climbing that is often more complex. This can be especially true at a busy wall with many distractions.

Considerable experience of group supervision alongside more experienced supervisors and instructors should be gained between training and assessment. As with personal climbing, this experience should be as varied as possible and gained at a variety of walls with groups undertaking bouldering and roped climbing.

Finally, climbing should be fun! Managing a group effectively should not detract from a group enjoying themselves.

3.4 Movement Skills

Climbing walls are excellent venues for learning fundamental elements of efficient climbing movement. Whether delivering a one-off session or managing a long-term programme, a CWA holder can lay a sound foundation for anyone's climbing career.

Candidates need to have a clear understanding of the concept of 'Centre of Balance' and its relevance to climbing. Candidates should appreciate how different climbing styles affect the position of the body's centre of balance and how that impacts upon the way in which the different muscle groups within the body are used.

Knowledge of the principles of efficient climbing movement may be very new to candidates, and at least a quarter of a training course should be taken up with this part of the syllabus. Candidates may need to reflect upon their own climbing style prior to assessment. Candidates are not expected to be expert climbers; this part of the syllabus is not about climbing grade but about climbing movement.

At assessment, candidates should understand and be able to demonstrate fundamental movement principles that contribute to efficient climbing technique. Candidates should feel

confident coaching participants in climbing movement. Verbal explanations, games (both climbing and non-climbing) and non-climbing exercises can be used, but candidates should consider how the principles they are trying to teach are encapsulated within any games or exercises they choose to employ.

Climbing walls cater to climbers of all abilities, and some climbs or bouldering areas may be inappropriate for some groups. Inadequate warm-ups or climbing too far beyond personal ability can lead to injury. Candidates should be aware of these issues, and manage sessions appropriately.

Trainers

3.1 Planning

A range of considerations is taken into account when planning a climbing session including group experience, objectives and venue choice. Trainers should draw upon their own experience to illustrate how these sometimes conflicting elements can be managed.

Different walls have different characteristics and may or may not be suitable for the objectives of a particular session. Candidates should be encouraged to consider the type of venue that may be most suited to certain groups or for developing specific climbing skills. For example, an outdoor boulder in a public park can be very accessible to groups on a limited budget; a dedicated bouldering facility is ideal for coaching climbing movement. Candidates may not be aware of the range of facilities available, and a training course should provide them with inspiration for their own work.

3.2 Organising

Briefings are important to ensure that group members are aware of the objectives of a session and how they will participate in the activity. Briefings also play an important role in identifying risks and explaining strategies that are employed to manage them, such as spotting when bouldering, or the rope management of peer belaying. There should be a range of experience within the group to draw upon, allowing candidates to develop their own style.

Choice and Use of Equipment

Candidates may have limited experience of equipment suitable for group use. Items such as full-body harnesses and auto-locking belay devices should be available for use during training to maximise the benefit derived from the course. Different venues will encourage the use of specific items of equipment, and candidates are expected to be aware of equipment suitable for use in a wide range of circumstances.

3.3 Managing

Many climbing techniques can be taught in isolation, such as methods of attachment to the rope. Trainers should demonstrate as much as possible the more subtle skills of managing climbing and bouldering sessions.

There is no single way to manage a group, and trainers should draw upon their own and candidates' experience of group work. Candidates should be reminded that a well-managed climbing session will be enjoyable for group members, and that group members can be involved in managing the risks in ways appropriate to their experience and maturity.

Working practices and ratios vary with group and situation. For example, a climbing programme spread over a number of weeks may include developing participants' personal responsibility, allowing them to operate as independent wall users. As such it may be managed differently from an introductory session for novices. Appreciating where group members lie on such a scale can be one of the most difficult decisions for a supervisor, and time should be spent discussing this issue.

Avoidance and Recognition of Problems
A training course should include a formal risk assessment, which may be best carried out at the training venue. A risk assessment highlights potential hazards that have direct implications for the avoidance and recognition of problems. Candidates should be made aware of the benefit of such an exercise.

Greater emphasis should be placed on good practices that avoid problems than on specific techniques required to solve them. Opportunities to discuss and demonstrate good practice in the following should be integrated throughout the training course: venue and route choice, managing expectations, establishing communications and positioning of the supervisor.

Problems are likely to fall into two categories: those in which no-one is exposed to immediate danger, such as an anxious climber, and those in which there is real risk of injury, such as a climber becoming detached from a rope. The former is not uncommon; the latter is very rare.

Problem solving should be introduced during a training course in a progressive way. The skills relate to many other aspects of the syllabus and should be incorporated into general sessions rather than dealt with in isolation. Problems such as novices getting stuck can be anticipated. It should be illustrated repeatedly that careful management should prevent these situations from occurring.

In addition to an integrated approach to problem avoidance, a hierarchy of actions to solve simple problems should be discussed and covered practically. An approach stressing simplicity and avoiding worst-case scenarios initially would be appropriate. Simple strategies such as maintaining eye contact, talking positively and using a tight rope to give reassurance can solve the majority of common problems, such as a 'stuck' anxious climber.

Candidates should be made aware of the risks associated with rescuing a climber detached from a rope and the potentially serious consequences of attempting such a rescue. Walls may have specific operating procedures for dealing with a serious incident, such as using ladders or moving crash mats.

Choice of Routes and Bouldering Venues
A well-selected route or bouldering venue should match the skills, ability and aspirations of group members, and problems such as over-anxiety should not occur. Equally important is consideration of the safety of a route, taking into account such factors as the location of the most difficult moves. If the hardest moves are directly off the ground then it may be difficult to prevent a falling climber from making contact with the ground. Equally, an outdoor open-access boulder may only have limited ground padding, requiring careful group management.

Supervision of Peer Belaying
Belayer error is a potential cause of serious accidents. The selection of an appropriate belay device and its correct use are fundamental to climbing. The decision as to when a student is capable of undertaking this element of rope management is an important one and is a critical judgement on the part of the supervisor.

Candidates often have limited experience of using different belay devices and supervising novices who are learning to belay. It may often be appropriate to create several opportunities during a training course to demonstrate a variety of peer-belaying methods. Between training and assessment, candidates should be strongly advised of the value of gaining experience of supervising novices belaying, preferably in controlled situations.

Bouldering
As very little equipment is required, bouldering is a very popular route into climbing, and there are many climbers who predominantly boulder, engaging in very little roped climbing. Candidates should be made aware that there is no hierarchy of activities within climbing and appreciate that a climbing session need not involve roped climbing at all, as much can be gained from bouldering alone. Time should be spent exploring how many climbing skills can be developed through bouldering.

Bouldering presents a number of variables with implications for group use:

- **Range of facilities.** Purpose-built boulders in public parks and bouldering-only climbing walls are each likely to have different floor coverings with implications for the activities undertaken.
- **Number of participants.** When compared with roped climbing, more people can boulder simultaneously.
- **Variable objectives.** Climbing a specific problem may be the aim but, likewise, bouldering games are often employed that develop movement skills.

Roped climbing is usually about 'getting to the top', but bouldering can be more about a climber's personal experience, and so less focus driven.

This change in emphasis is very important. If a climbing session is seen as goal oriented, some groups may finish a session dispirited if they have not achieved the 'goal'. They may, however, respond well to climbing sessions where there is no defined target, and bouldering can provide a great opportunity for such sessions. This distinction provides a good opportunity to discuss how a supervisor's view of what a climbing session should entail can result in the supervisor planning a session that may be inappropriate for the group.

Unless a venue can be booked exclusively, bouldering will take place amongst other wall users. Strategies to control the session as well as providing direction should therefore be evolved to avoid conflict and ensure that the sessions are constructive, well managed and enjoyable.

Candidates are expected to gain bouldering experience both as individuals and in a supervisory capacity prior to an assessment. Contrary to the apparently low risk associated with bouldering, it is the one activity where students under supervision can, and frequently do, fall unprotected to the ground. At walls it is usual to have some form of matting, but this is very variable, and as a consequence the activity must be modified to suit the nature of the

facility. Given the often crowded situations at indoor venues and the competitive nature of some groups, it cannot be emphasised enough that bouldering on these venues may require constant vigilance to ensure the safety of the group and other wall users.

3.4 Movement Skills

Terms like 'fluid climbing' or 'good footwork' can be highly subjective, and without clear explanation candidates could be left confused. Within the CWA, 'movement skills' is used to describe principles of efficient climbing movement. Different climbers move in different ways; the term 'climbing style' reflects this.

This element of the syllabus may be very new to candidates, who may need to reflect upon their own climbing style. Beginning a training course with this part of the syllabus allows concepts to be revisited later.

Centre of Balance

Candidates should have a clear understanding of the concept of 'Centre of Balance' and its relevance to climbing movement. Candidates may have experience of other activities where the effect of gravity upon the body has an influence upon technique. The Fosbury flop revolutionised the high jump, for example, as it allows the body's centre of balance to pass under the bar!

Non-climbing exercises can be helpful when introducing centre of balance. Once understood as a general principle of all movement it can be easier to appreciate its relevance to climbing. For example, the everyday activity of getting out of a chair without using the hands demonstrates the link between centre of balance and pushing with the legs: the body's centre of balance is positioned above the feet before the legs are extended to stand up.

Candidates should appreciate that the body's centre of balance is not fixed but shifts when one part of the body moves. Candidates should be aware that:

1. climbing style affects the position of the body's centre of balance
2. the position of the body's centre of balance affects which muscle groups are used when climbing.

The easiest bouldering or roped climbing problems may be most appropriate for this part of the syllabus, as candidates may find concepts difficult to grasp.

Games

Games are often used as a way of developing movement skills, and trainers should make clear which skills a particular game develops. Without such explanations candidates may be unsure how to use games themselves.

Observation Skills

Candidates are not expected to be 'performance coaches' but should have a clear idea of how body position impacts upon efficient climbing movement and be able to give feedback to other climbers.

Covering simple observational techniques can be done with the trainer climbing in a variety of ways, incorporating both efficient and inefficient climbing styles. It should be borne in mind that asking a candidate to climb, who is then observed, could be intimidating and result in them missing out on developing observational skills.

Climbing Wall Angle

Modern climbing walls include panels which range in inclination from slab to roof, and CWA holders are likely to supervise groups on a large variety of angles of climbing surface. Therefore, the different climbing styles used for different levels of steepness should be discussed and practised.

Candidates' personal ability may prevent them from being able to climb effectively on the steeper sections of a wall, and knowledge of climbing styles for steeper angles may be at the limit of a candidate's knowledge.

However, the fundamental principles of efficient climbing movement are the same, irrespective of the angle of a climb, and climbing on a variety of surfaces can be very powerful in reinforcing these principles.

Warming up, Training and Injury Avoidance

Climbing provides intense physical demands that can result in injuries such as damaged finger tendons or, in the case of bouldering, lower limb injuries from poor landings. On climbing walls in particular there can be a tendency to undertake high-intensity activity too soon. Candidates should be aware of these dangers and take steps to minimise their likelihood by instilling good practice in novices under their supervision. Candidates should know how to manage an appropriate warm-up before commencing a climbing session. Climbing beyond personal ability can lead to injury, and candidates should be conscious of their duty of care to group members with regard to choosing objectives matched to ability. Training techniques are continually evolving in climbing. Candidates are not expected to be able to deliver 'training programmes' but should be made aware of how they may start gaining such information, should they be interested.

Assessors

The assessment of supervision may take place with groups of genuine novices, through role-play with peers and through discussion. An assessor should consider the supervisory experiences recorded in the logbook and use this to create an overall picture of the candidate. The benefits of using a real group during an assessment must be balanced against the complications that result from having an additional group for which the assessor may have overall responsibility. This situation needs to be carefully managed, otherwise the flexibility of a session may be lost and an assessment compromised. The benefits of assessing a candidate in a more realistic supervisory role, however, may at times outweigh the potential difficulties.

It is usual for an assessor to establish candidates' personal climbing competence before assessing them in a supervisory capacity. Assessing personal ability ensures an appropriate emphasis on the need for a candidate to be a wall climber first and foremost rather than simply a supervisor with limited ability and understanding of the activity.

3.1 Planning

Candidates need to demonstrate an awareness of factors to consider when planning a session. These are likely to include some or all of the following: the group's experience and aspirations, the venue chosen, insurance, child protection and the policies of authorising organisations. Candidates should appreciate conflicts that may occur and be able to plan a session with built-in flexibility.

Candidates must possess a current first aid certificate for their CWA to be valid. A Pass may not be issued at assessment to a candidate not possessing a current and suitable first aid qualification. Candidates need to have a good understanding of the procedures for administering first aid and calling for help in the event of an accident or illness.

3.2 Organising

The way in which a group is organised impacts upon the success of their climbing session and the enjoyment and safety of other wall users. Candidates should be able to issue appropriate equipment for roped climbing and bouldering, and deliver clear instructions on its correct use.

Candidates should deliver clear briefings throughout the assessment, as they form an important element of successful organisation and group management.

3.3 Managing

Managing a group of climbers requires judgement as to when to apply the different skills and techniques that a supervisor possesses. Assessors should build in opportunities throughout the course where different solutions are demanded. For instance, using ground anchors directly/indirectly, beginning a session with bouldering/roped climbing, peer belaying/supervisor belaying, using games/explanations to coach movement skills. Creating choices provides opportunities for candidates to demonstrate judgement as well as perform skills.

Group Supervision

Climbing walls are often busy, presenting distractions for wall users. Candidates need to demonstrate appropriate management styles that do not compromise their group's safety or that of other wall users.

Bouldering is potentially one of the more difficult sessions to control, and assessors should strive for realism when setting tasks. Logbook evidence of experience combined with discussion will contribute to the evaluation of an individual's abilities in this area. Recognition of hazards, techniques for controlling the activity and the group, and imaginative delivery are all key factors to assess.

When roped climbing, one of the most difficult decisions a supervisor must make is when to allow novices to belay each other and how to manage peer belaying. As belayer error is a potential cause of serious accidents, candidates should appreciate when peer belaying may or may not be appropriate and should know a range of safe rope management strategies suitable for a variety of situations.

Climbing Objectives

The selection of appropriate routes and bouldering forms a very important part of effective group management and problem avoidance. When too hard, objectives can intimidate, de-motivate and possibly injure group members. When too easy, a group will not be challenged and can quickly become bored with the activity. Much can be learnt about a candidate's personal climbing-wall experience by asking them to choose climbs or bouldering appropriate for groups with a range of experience and aspirations.

Avoidance and Recognition of Problems

Problem avoidance is a theme that is best dealt with as issues arise throughout assessment,

rather than as a session in isolation. Candidates should be able to plan, organise and manage a climbing session effectively, in which the group is briefed appropriately and directed towards objectives that are matched to their ability and aspirations. Candidates should appreciate that such an approach to group management is the best way to avoid the most common problems arising in the first place.

Candidates should possess strategies allowing them to deal with problems where no individual is in immediate danger, such as a nervous climber, and those where there is a real risk of injury, such as a climber becoming detached from the rope. With more serious scenarios, candidates should demonstrate strategies where they, their group and other wall users are not exposed to danger as well.

Where a candidate does not appear to have the experience to foresee problems it would be reasonable to set a testing scenario that requires appropriate skills to resolve. Equally, where an assessor has every confidence that a candidate has the experience to foresee and avoid problems, they may not need to set a specific problem to solve.

3.4 Movement Skills

Candidates are expected to understand principles of efficient climbing movement and be able to coach others in these skills. A comparison can be made with other elements of the syllabus, such as belaying or tying on, where candidates need to demonstrate personal competence and be able to coach good practice. Candidates should understand the concept of 'Centre of Balance', and appreciate its relationship to climbing movement. Assessors should be conscious that this element of the syllabus is not about homogenising climbing style. Rather, it is about candidates incorporating principles of efficient climbing movement into their climbing coaching.

There are many ways in which a candidate's knowledge of movement skills can be assessed, including the ability to lead confidently and efficiently at Fr 4 or above. Candidates can then explain movement principles and demonstrate these practically. Whilst candidates may often work with groups over a long period of time and may well be able to develop the skills and abilities of those in their charge, they are not expected to be performance coaches with the skills and knowledge to develop training plans or other such resources.

Candidates should be able to use a range of climbing and non-climbing exercises that develop movement skills, and assessment should provide an opportunity to share ideas and develop this knowledge further.

The use of role-play as an assessment tool should be handled carefully. Just as people walk in different ways, so they climb in different ways. Asking one group of candidates to climb in a specific style, then to be coached by another candidate, may create unrealistic scenarios from which little can be gained.

4. Abseiling Module

Photo: West Yorkshire Scouts

This element of the CWA is optional and is designed to equip candidates with the skills and techniques required for managing top-roping and abseiling groups on purpose-built artificial climbing walls and structures. Awareness of the skills outlined in the rest of the syllabus is assumed and not repeated here.

Platforms or stances designed for top-roping and abseiling are incorporated into walls in a variety of ways. Such facilities can be an integral part of a wall, or an existing architectural feature may be adapted, such as the inside of a tower being used for abseiling. Access to these facilities varies. Artificial climbing towers often incorporate a central staircase or ladder, whereas the only access at some indoor walls is by climbing up to a stance. Finally, some stances may be inappropriate for both abseiling and top-roping, and others may be dual use.

The CWA scheme does not prescribe methodologies for all situations. Instead, a range of techniques is covered which will be appropriate for different circumstances.

Walls may not permit public access to their top-roping and abseiling facilities, and even where access is available, it may be necessary to undergo a separate induction before such facilities can be used.

Candidates

4.1 Equipment

Candidates should be aware of a range of equipment suitable for use whilst abseiling and top-roping. A CWA holder should be able to offer advice on choice and suitability of equipment as well as having a reasonable knowledge of its care, maintenance and life expectancy.

4.2 Top-roping

There is an assumption that all candidates undertaking this element of the CWA will have belayed at the top of a climb. Prior to training this experience could be gained either indoors or outdoors.

Top-roping provides a very different climbing experience for both supervisor and group members. With the climber moving towards the belayer it can be an effective technique for a nervous climber, as eye contact is easier to maintain. With the participant 'topping-out', a greater sense of achievement may also be engendered. However, as the group is often managed at a distance, top-roping may be inappropriate in some circumstances. Candidates need to be clear about the needs of the group and the aims of a session when deciding upon which rope system to employ.

Anchors and Belaying

Candidates should be capable of setting up a basic but sound anchor system at the top of a climb, utilising a variety of pre-existing anchor points. Candidates need to understand the principles of equalising anchors to a central point and be able to attach themselves and others to such attachment points. A variety of top anchors are commonly available, and candidates need to be able to adapt techniques for a given situation.

4.3 Abseiling

As a personal skill, candidates should be familiar with the technique and practice of abseiling as a means of descent, with or without a safety rope, prior to training.

4.4 Management of Groups Accessing the Tops of Walls

Candidates should be able to evaluate the risks inherent in accessing and using a variety of walls for top-roping and abseiling. Candidates should be familiar with a range of techniques and choose appropriate management strategies to safeguard both themselves and group members.

Trainers

4.1 Equipment

Much climbing equipment is designed to be used in a wide variety of situations, such as bottom-roping, top-roping, lead climbing and abseiling. However, some equipment is designed for specific activities. Equipment already used within the training course should be evaluated for its top-roping and abseiling suitability. Candidates should be made aware of equipment that might be appropriate, or inappropriate, for top-roping and abseiling.

4.2 Top-roping

Top-roping often requires managing a group at a distance or managing parts of the same group simultaneously – one at the top and another at the bottom of a climb. Strategies for managing a group in these situations should be discussed, including the way in which other competent people, who may have no knowledge of climbing, could be used.

Anchors and Belaying

Different walls provide a variety of top-rope anchors. The greatest variation is likely to be in anchor type, anchor height and distance relative to the belaying position. However, it may not be possible for trainers to demonstrate this variation practically at a single venue.

Therefore, candidates should be made aware of principles they need to consider when setting up a top-rope and shown systems that can be adapted to suit a variety of situations. These may well be constructed by the trainer at the base of a wall for illustrative purposes. Candidates should be made aware that the venue used for training may be very different from that used at assessment or when working with a group.

The belay device can be attached in a variety of ways, and it is often preferable not to have the harness as an integral part of the system. The advantages of a variety of systems should be evaluated during training, including situations where their use would be appropriate.

When belaying at the top of a climb, choosing an appropriate position is very important. As with bottom-roping, the forces created when top-roping have implications for rope management. Some stances may be small, resulting in arm movement being restricted, and may not provide enough space for more than one person. Alternatively a large, flat platform may be available, providing plenty of space to manage a group of people. Training venues should be selected that enable candidates to appreciate this variation and to equip them with techniques for a variety of situations.

Falls and Lowers
This element of the syllabus should be practised only in the most controlled situations. Holding a fall when top-roping should be included in a training course. In effect, this should amount to no more than taking the weight of a climber, as good rope management would result in a fall being arrested before the climber has gained momentum. This provides an opportunity to illustrate the importance of good belay technique, belayer positioning and appropriate attachment to anchors.

4.3 Abseiling
Within the CWA, abseiling will take place on purpose-built structures where there should be no conflict with other climbers. Candidates should be made aware that abseiling has a specific role in the wider skill-set of rock climbing – namely as a means of descent rather than as an activity in its own right – although there will be many situations where it is undertaken as an end in itself. Candidates should be made aware of issues regarding abseiling on natural crags, as they will be involved in explaining to others some of the issues specific to rock climbing outdoors.

Setting up Abseils
Candidates should be able to set up and use fixed and releasable abseils with the rope attached to suitable anchors. A releasable system of attaching the abseil rope to anchors is useful in a supervisory situation and should be demonstrated and practised at training. The advantages of each method of attachment in different situations should be evaluated.

The only access to some abseil platforms may be by climbing up to them, requiring candidates to secure themselves in descent. Trainers are expected to demonstrate appropriate methods of self protection to assist candidates in safeguarding themselves when abseiling.

Friction Devices
Different abseiling situations may require the use of different friction devices. Factors such as how slick, stiff and thick the rope is, the steepness of the abseil, the confidence, the ability and the weight of the abseiler all affect the choice of device. It may be appropriate to demonstrate a range of techniques and methods of altering the degree of friction.

Abseiling Problems
Most abseiling problems are foreseeable and so should not occur. Methods of solving simple problems should be covered at training, but the emphasis should be placed on the skills and judgements required to prevent problems from occurring in the first place.

Solutions to problems such as tangled ropes, a jammed friction device or a student moving to one side resulting in a potential pendulum should be considered.

4.4 Management of Groups Accessing the Top of Walls
There is great variation in the construction and design of top-roping and abseiling facilities, and trainers should make candidates aware of management strategies that would be appropriate for a variety of situations. There are perhaps two distinct issues to consider:

- Accessing the top of a wall
- Safeguarding a group once at the top of a wall.

Access may be straightforward, such as a staircase, or more involved, such as top-rope access only. Once positioned at the top, there may be a secure area for groups to congregate, requiring limited direct management. Alternatively there may be a platform with no railings or other security, necessitating a clear strategy to safeguard both supervisor and group.

Adaptable systems should be demonstrated and typical set-ups discussed.

Assessors

4.1 Equipment
Candidates should be aware that some climbing equipment may be suitable for use in a variety of situations and that other equipment may be best suited for specific tasks.

4.2 Top-roping
Candidates should be able to lead competently at Fr 4 or above and attach themselves to in-situ top anchors, in preparation for belaying a climber. Candidates should be able to belay and lower a second and attach them to top anchors. Top-roping venues vary greatly with regard to access to stances, anchor type and location. Candidates should understand principles for setting up a top-rope and demonstrate systems that can be adapted to suit circumstances.

Top-roping often requires managing groups at a distance or parts of the same group simultaneously – one at the top and another at the bottom of the wall. As well as being able to manage rope systems competently, candidates should appreciate when top-roping may, or may not, be an appropriate activity and know a range of group management strategies.

4.3 Abseiling
Abseiling as a personal skill should be assessed during the course as well as the management of group abseil sessions. Purpose-built abseil stations may be used, with conveniently placed high anchors, as well as stances that may commonly be used for top-roping. Candidates should be able to adapt their rope systems and group management styles to suit different locations.

Candidates should appreciate the specific role of abseiling within the wider activity of climbing on natural crags, namely as a means of descent rather that as an activity in its own right.

4.4 Management of Groups Accessing the Top of Walls

Whether managing a group at the top of a wall or managing a group peer belaying, candidates need to evaluate risk and select appropriate management strategies. Candidates should be able to manage groups accessing the top of a variety of walls in a variety of ways. Scenarios that require candidates to be flexible with their systems can help in assessing this element of the syllabus.

Photo: Alex Messenger

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Appendix 1
Model Home Paper

Roles / HSE

- What are the roles of the

  1. Climbing wall owner?
  2 Climbing wall manager?
  3 Climbing wall instructor?

- Within a climbing wall facility, who has overall responsibility for the maintenance of the wall?
- Describe your understanding of the BMC participation statement, and should you make your group aware of this?
- What is AALS (formally AALA)?
- Does a climbing wall need to be AALS licensed?
- Do you need to be AALS licensed if you are taking a group of under 16s to the climbing wall?
- Do you need to have insurance to lead a session at a climbing wall?
- Does the climbing wall you are using need to have insurance?
- If an accident happened and it was due to faulty kit associated with the climbing wall, who would be liable for

  1. The fabric/fixings of the wall?
  2. Equipment issued by the wall?

- Should you intervene if you see poor practice on a climbing wall?
- If you are using a climbing wall and it does not seem to be well maintained, how would you tackle this with the climbing wall manager?
- Who should manage Health and Safety at work?
- What is Riddor?
- If a wall establishment says it is a member of the ABC, what does this mean?
- When was the ABC established?
- What is the MLTA?
- What are the five steps to risk assessment as recommended by the HSE?
- List five potential hazards that you need to check for in a wall that is shared with another user e.g. a badminton court.

Group orientated / Technical / History

- You have a group of young people who you are going to take to the climbing wall for their first climbing experience. What equipment should you take with you?
- What items of equipment would be different for groups comprising children compared to adult groups?
- What should you do if a hold rotates when your group is using it?
- Why do many leading walls have two karabiners at the top of routes?
- Whilst climbing with your group, you see another instructor who has a difficult group and has two group members who are swinging on the ropes. What should you do?
- Whilst climbing with your group, you see another pair who are belaying in an unsafe manner. What should you do?
- Name two hazards associated with loose crash mat style bouldering mats.
- Before starting a bouldering session with a group, what briefing would you give them?
- When you are getting your group into their harnesses and helmets, are there any issues that you should be aware of? If so what are they?
- If you have a regular group of climbers and you want to take them to a different wall, where would you find details of other facilities?
- What was the first official climbing wall in the UK and when was it opened?
- How can you prevent injuries at the wall?
- What would you put into a warm-up?
- If someone's finger made a cracking noise when they were climbing, what would be your advice?
- Name three manufacturers of climbing walls and/or holds.
- What are the potential hazards associated with an auto-belay machine and how could you minimise these risks?

Additional Questions for Abseil Module:

- If you are setting up an abseil in the climbing wall, list five points that you would include in your briefing.
- If the belayer is situated at the top of an abseil structure, list five potential hazards and how to minimise the risk for each.
- How would you safeguard yourself while operating near the top of a climbing wall or tower?

Appendix 2
Sample Programme

Climbing Wall Award

Training Course – Minimum twelve hours contact time
Providers may choose to offer this course in a range of formats, from a 'short weekend' through to a number of evening sessions. One example is shown below.

Day 1
Morning - Meet at Wall 1
Course introduction, paperwork, review of personal climbing experience
Equipment, belaying

Afternoon – Wall 1
Personal climbing skills, movement skills, leading routes

Evening- Return to Wall 1/meeting room
Background knowledge – climbing wall development
Climbing wall rules and etiquette
Duty of care

Day 2
Morning - Meet at Wall 2
The climbing wall environment
Planning, organising and managing sessions

Afternoon – Wall 1
Group supervision and management
Basic problem solving

Abseil Module

Training Course – Minimum four hours contact time
Providers may choose to offer this as an additional element of the Level 1 Training Course or as a 'stand alone' module.

Day 1
Afternoon – Meet at Climbing Wall
Course introduction, paperwork
Equipment, belaying, anchors, managing simple problems
Group management and supervision

Assessment Course – Minimum two hours contact time
Providers may choose to provide this as an additional element of the Climbing Wall Award or as a 'stand alone' module.

Day 1
Afternoon – Meet at Climbing Wall
Group supervision and management – planning, organising and managing sessions
Providers may or may not choose to use 'real students' as part of the session.

Appendix 3
Mountain Training Boards and Mountaineering Councils

Mountain Leader Training UK
MLTUK, Siabod Cottage, Capel Curig, Conwy LL24 0ES
Tel: 01690 720272 Fax: 01690 720248
Email: info@mltuk.org Website: www.mltuk.org

Home Nation Mountain Training Boards

Mountain Leader Training England
MLTE, Siabod Cottage, Capel Curig, Conwy LL24 0ES
Tel: 01690 720314 Fax: 01690 720248
Email: info@mlte.org Website: www.mlte.org

Mountain Leader Training Northern Ireland
MLTNI, Tollymore Mountain Centre, Bryansford, Newcastle, Co Down BT33 0PT
Tel: 02843 722158 Fax: 02843 726155
Email: admin@tollymoremc.com Website: www.tollymoremc.com

Mountain Leader Training Scotland
MLTS, Glenmore, Aviemore, Inverness-shire PH22 1QU
Tel: 01479 861248 Fax: 01479 861249
Email: smltb@aol.com Website: www.mltscotland.org

Mountain Leader Training Wales / Hyfforddi Arweinwyr Mynydd Cymru
MLTW, Siabod Cottage, Capel Curig, Conwy LL24 0ES
Tel: 01690 720361 Fax: 01690 720 248
Email: info@mltw.org Website: www.mltw.org

Mountaineering Councils

British Mountaineering Council
BMC, 177-179 Burton Road, Manchester M20 2BB
Tel: 0161 445 6111 Fax: 0161 445 4500
Email: office@thebmc.co.uk Website: www.thebmc.co.uk

Mountaineering Council of Ireland
MCI, Sport HQ, 13 Joyce Way, Park West Business Park, Dublin 12, Ireland
Tel: 00 353 (1) 625 1115 Fax: 00 353 (1) 625 1116
Email: mci@eircom.net Website: www.mountaineering.ie

Mountaineering Council of Scotland
MCofS, The Old Granary, West Mill Street, Perth PH1 5QP
Tel: 01738 638227 Fax: 01738 442095
Email: info@mountaineering-scotland.org.uk
Website: www.mountaineering-scotland.org.uk

Appendix 4
Suggested Reading List

Syllabus

Rock Climbing Essential Skills and Techniques . . . . Libby Peter, MLTUK, 2004

The Complete Rock Climber . . . . . Malcolm Creasey et al, Lorenz Books, 2003

The Handbook of Climbing . . . . . Allen Fyffe & Iain Peter, Pelham Books, 1997

The Complete Guide to Rope Techniques . . . . . Nigel Shepherd, Francis Lincoln Ltd, 2007

Mountain Skills Training Handbook . . . . . Pete Hill & Stuart Johnston, David & Charles, 2004

Training

Training for Climbing . . . . . Eric Horst, Globe Pequot Press, 2002

Training for Rock Climbing . . . . . Steve Bollen, Penguin Books, 1994

Performance Rock Climbing . . . . . Dale Goddard & Udo Newmann, Stockpole Books, 1993

One Move Too Many . . . . . Thomas Hichholzer & Volker Schoeffl, Petzl, 2003

Learning to Climb Indoors. . . . . Eric Horst, Falcon Press, 2006

Climbing from Gym to Crag . . . . . S Peter Lewis & Dan Cauthorn, Swan Hill Press, 2000

The Self-Coached Climber . . . . . Dan Hague & Douglas Hunter, Stackpole Books, 2006
Exercises for Climbers. . . . . Lisa M Wolfe, Wish Publishing, 2005

The Rock Warrior's Way:
Mental Training for Climbers. . . . . Arno Ilgner, Desiderata Inst, 2006

Technical Competence

Climbing Walls: A Complete Guide. . . . . James Steihl &Tim Ramsey, Human Kinetics, 2004

Care and Maintenance. . . . . BMC

Knots for Climbers . . . . . Craig Leubben, Falcon Press, 2001

Climbing Wall Manual: Design,
Development and Management . . . . . BMC

Scottish Climbing Walls . . . . . MCofS

Climbing Wall Directory . . . . . BMC, 2008

Supervision

Leading and Managing Groups in the Outdoors . . Ken Ogilvie, IOL, reprinted 2005

National Guidelines . . . . . MLTUK

Protecting Children – A Guide for Sportspeople . . . Sportscoach UK and NSPCC

Working Out of Doors with Young People . . . . . Alan Smith, IRTC, 1987

Safety, Risk and Adventure in Outdoor Activities . . Bob Barton, PCP, 2007

Child Protection Policy. . . . . Mountaineering Councils

Outdoor Activities, Negligence and the Law. . . . . Julian Fulbrook, Ashgate, 2005

DVD Titles

"Climb When Ready" . . . . . UIAA, 2005

"Neil Gresham's Masterclass" Parts1+2 . . . . . Crux Films, 2005

Websites

www.thebmc.co.uk
www.hse.gov.uk
www.ukclimbing.com
www.planetfear.com
www.mltuk.org
www.mountaineering-scotland.org

Appendix 5
Provider Guidance

In September 1997 MLTUK agreed a set of quality control requirements for all approved schemes within Mountain Leader Training. Individual Boards may then add to these minimum requirements.

1 Approval System
Approval to become a course Provider may only be granted by a Training Board and not an individual employee. Initial approval is for one probationary course, which will be moderated. Approval will then be granted for the remainder of the year subject to a favourable report.

Course Provider status is granted for one year only. A review at the end of the year enables the Board to consider all approvals.

All Providers must be holders of either a Mountaineering Instructor Award or Certificate or be British Mountain Guides. They must also have experience of at least three CWA or SPA courses, one of which must be an assessment, before gaining approval. All applicants have to satisfy their Board that they fulfil any additional requirements, such as meeting the needs of specific catchments of candidates. In addition all applicants must have attended an approved movement skills workshop such as a movement workshop delivered by Mountain Leader Training or the BMC FUNdamentals of Climbing.

2 Workshops
All Boards run training events and workshops for their Providers. Attendance at an approved workshop or seminar, preferably scheme specific, at least once every three years is a mandatory requirement. Providers may attend events run by their own or any other Board.

3 Ratios
1:6 on training courses, maximum course size 12, minimum 4. Assistant must hold CWA or a higher award.

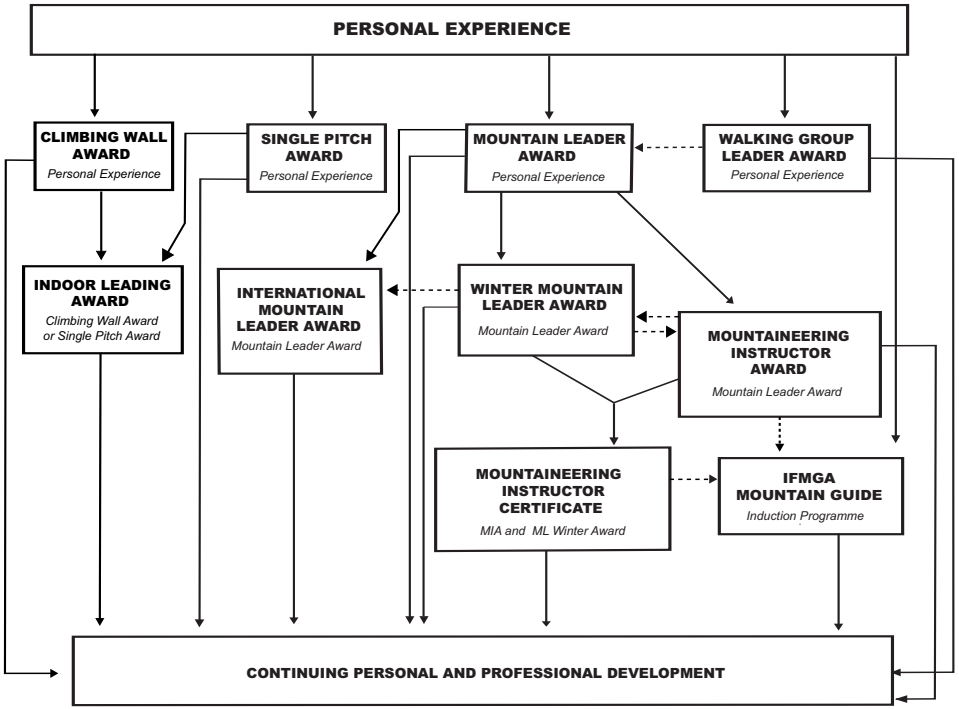
1:4 on assessment courses, maximum course size 8, minimum 2. Assistant must hold MIA or a higher award.

4 Moderation
Following the initial visit to the probationary course, Providers can normally expect to be visited by a moderator once in every three years.

5 Board/Provider Links
MLTE, MLTNI, MLTS and MLTW are required to develop a variety of methods for ensuring effective communication between themselves and their Providers. Currently these include newsletters and personal contacts between Providers and Training Board staff as well as the workshops and moderation visits listed above.

Appendix 6:
Awards of the United Kingdom

Personal experience requirements increase as candidates progress to higher awards,



Pre-requisite qualifications shown in Italics
Dotted lines show optional pathways

Mountain Leader Training Association

The association for climbing and walking leaders.

MLTA aims to provide good communication between leaders and the Mountain Leader Training Boards allowing members to keep up to date with current developments in mountain training. It also aims to provide appropriate training opportunities in the form of workshops and seminars.

Membership

Full Membership is open to leaders who have passed the assessment course of one of the national awards of the UK's Mountain Training Boards.
The relevant awards are CWA, SPA, WGL, ML, ML(W) and higher awards.

Associate Membership is open to leaders who have registered for any of the above awards but have yet to pass an assessment course.

Note: All MLTA members must be a member of a Mountaineering Council.

The Benefits

- Talk to other members, share ideas or concerns and have your say via the lively Forum
- Browse the Library of topical articles and features
- Receive regular informative e-newsletters
- Access to a program of Further Training workshops and related National Events
- Contact leaders looking for work on the Notice Board
- Priority channel to get information from the Helpdesk
- Access to Insurance for members' activities
- Access to preferential rates on Clothing and Equipment

Additional Benefits

MLTA is run from the Mountain Leader Training offices at Siabod Cottage and members have direct access to the MLTA Technical Officer, who will deal with all your queries with support from other highly experienced staff members.

How to join?

Join when you renew your Mountaineering Council membership or go to www.mlta.co.uk and join on-line.

www.mlta.co.uk

Mountain Leader Training UK

Hyfforddi Arweinwyr Mynydda y Deyrnas Unedig

£5.00