



Climbing Wall Instructor (CWI) Overview (Formerly Climbing Wall Award (CWI))



The Climbing Wall Instructor qualification trains and assesses candidates in the skills required to supervise climbers on purpose built artificial climbing walls and boulders. It is ideal for people who work at climbing walls or at venues with permanent or mobile climbing towers.

There is also an optional **Abseil and Top Roping Module** (often run in conjunction with Climbing Wall Instructor training and assessment courses) which is all about supervising abseiling on artificial structures.

*The Climbing Wall Instructor qualification **does not include the skills and techniques required to teach lead climbing.***

Before you start:

Before registration, candidates must be able to answer yes to the following questions:

- Are you at least 17 years old (18 for assessment)?
- Do you have at least 6 months of experience of using a variety of climbing walls?
- Do you have an interest in climbing and in supervising groups on climbing walls?
- Are you a member of a mountaineering council; Mountaineering Ireland, Mountaineering Scotland or the British Mountaineering Council?
- Have you visited 3 different climbing walls on at least 15 different occasions; this must include at least one major public wall?
- Have you led at least 10 routes at Fr4 on climbing walls?

Registration and Logbook

Once you have satisfied the above, register with Mountaineering Ireland for the Climbing Wall Instructor Award, (registration for the Abseil Module is automatically added to your account when you register for the Climbing Wall Instructor Scheme. A digital logbook will be provided. This logbook is a vital link between the candidate, Mountaineering Ireland, and the training provider and provides a clear record of candidates' climbing experience and activity, their fulfilment of the requirements of the scheme, and course attendance. The logbook must be kept up-to-date and be submitted or shared when booking places on courses. The training/assessment course director will monitor the logbooks on behalf of Mountaineering Ireland. Once you have registered and have access to your log book, you can book a training course directly with one our approved providers

Training

Climbing Wall Instructor training courses last for 2 days (16 hours) and will be run by one of our approved providers in Ireland or the UK. The course comprises of a mixture of indoor lectures/discussions and practical sessions. Topics covered on the Climbing Wall Instructor training syllabus will include:

Technical Competence (such as equipment, anchors, belaying, personal climbing skills, background knowledge)

Management and Decision Making (including planning, decision making, managing other staff, managing participants, knowledge and demonstration of techniques)

Teaching and Learning Skills

The Climbing Environment (including etiquette, access and ethics)

The ratio for Climbing Wall Instructor training is a maximum of 1 instructor to 6 candidates.

Before you attend an **Abseil and Top Roping Module** training course, make sure you have done the following:

- You must be registered for the scheme (see above)
- You must have completed the Climbing Wall Instructor training course. (Some providers offer the Abseil Module as part of the main training course if the facility they are planning to use is appropriate).
- You must have experience of at least 5 abseils from more than one location.

The **Abseil and Top Roping Module** lasts for 4 hours and will be run by one of our approved providers in Ireland or the UK. The course comprises of a mixture of indoor lectures/discussions and practical sessions.

Topics covered on the Climbing Wall Instructor Abseil and Top Roping Module training syllabus will include:

Technical Competence (including equipment, belaying, abseiling)

Management and Decision Making (including planning, managing participants, managing other staff, decision making, knowledge and demonstration of techniques)

Teaching and Learning Skills

The ratio for Climbing Wall Instructor Abseil and Top Roping Module training is a maximum of 1 instructor to 6 candidates.

Consolidation

The period between training and assessment varies in length for each person and is an opportunity to develop your skills, paying particular attention to any weaknesses identified during your training course. So, go climbing and use your enthusiasm to hone your skills for as long as you like.

Mountaineering Ireland recommends that all, but the most experienced candidates allow a minimum of 3 months between training and assessment.

Before you attend a Climbing Wall Instructor assessment, make sure you have done the following:

- You must be at least 18 years old.
- You must have attended a Climbing Wall Instructor (or Climbing Wall Award) training course or have been granted exemption from training.
- You must be familiar with the syllabus.
- You must have logged a minimum of 30 visits to at least three different climbing walls.
- You must have led a minimum of 40 climbs on climbing walls.
- You must be confident at leading routes at Fr 4.
- You must have assisted in the supervision of at least 15 instructed sessions on at least two different walls including a large public facility in a variety of contexts. At least five of these sessions must have personal reflective comments recorded in your logbook.
- For any leader, first aid is an essential skill. Prior to undertaking Climbing Wall Instructor assessment, therefore, candidates must also hold a current, relevant first aid qualification, which involves 8 hours of training and an element of assessment.

Candidates would also benefit from gaining bouldering experience both as an individual and in a supervisory capacity prior to assessment.

Assessment

Rock Climbing Instructor assessment takes places over 6 hours. Candidates will be tested in all aspects of the syllabus by an approved assessor. The ratio is 1 instructor to 4 candidates for Climbing Wall Instructor assessment. Visit the course calendar to see when the next assessment is running and contact the provider directly to book on to the assessment.

Written tests of some form may also be given in advance of, or during, assessment. They will not determine the final result but will aid the assessors when considering the choice of tasks to be set in the course. Written papers are likely to focus on areas of the syllabus which include the wider knowledge of the sport.

Before you attend a **Climbing Wall Instructor assessment**, make sure you have done the following:

- You must be at least 18 years old.
- You must have attended a Climbing Wall Instructor (or Climbing Wall Award) training course or have been granted exemption from training.

Before you attend an **Abseiling and Top Roping assessment**, make sure you have done the following:

- You must have attended an Abseil and Top Roping training course.
- You must have passed the Climbing Wall Instructor Assessment.

The Abseil and Top Roping Module assessment. The main Climbing Wall Instructor assessment must be completed before going onto the Abseil Module assessment.

What next?

Once you have registered, contact one of our approved providers directly for more information, costs and to start your Climbing Wall Instructor training. Climbing Wall Instructor training is held around the country on a regular basis. Visit our course calendar to see when and where courses are running. Please note that courses are priced by the individual provider.

Support & Development

Join the **Mountain Training Association** and be part of a community of like-minded people on our schemes. The Association offers a range of workshops for trainees and qualified leaders and coaches across the disciplines, as well as a quarterly magazine, gear deals/discounts, a monthly newsletter and an insurance deal. You can join the Association at any point after you have registered on one of Mountain Training's leadership/coaching schemes.

The Book – Rock Climbing

Rock Climbing has been written for people working their way through the climbing schemes and it's packed with colourful diagrams, photographs and simple language. It covers the full spectrum of modern climbing practice including movement skills, knots, bouldering, sport, trad, and indoor climbing as well as risk management and problem solving. This book is available in the shop on the Mountaineering Ireland website.

The Videos

Please check out the **Skills Videos** on the Mountaineering Ireland website and youtube channel.

The Scope of the Scheme

The Climbing Wall Instructor qualification is for climbers who are in a position of responsibility when supervising climbing activities on indoor walls, artificial boulders and towers.

This includes a wide range of structures utilised for these activities which are referred to 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.

The 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.

A qualified instructor can:

- Teach climbing wall skills
- Take people climbing, bouldering in walls and on completion of the abseil module, abseiling in walls.
- Manage groups safely in these activities.

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 care of young people and beginners. It is the combination of technical skills, wide experience and personal qualities that forms the basis for effective supervision. This scheme assesses the technical skills and experience; the employer or organising authority must gauge the personal qualities.

The scheme **does not cover**:

- The teaching or supervision of leading, (these are covered by the Climbing Wall Development Instructor)
- The gauging of a candidate's personal qualities.