

Rock Skills

Guidance notes for course delivery.

INTRODUCTION

- These guidance notes should be used together with the Rock Skills handbook.
- Candidates can enter the Rock Skills scheme at any stage, therefore it is important that candidates receive sound guidance on where best to enter the scheme.
- Each level shares the same core topics, which are developed accordingly. This accommodates candidates entering at various stages. It is important to evaluate competence on entry and strive to bridge any gaps in knowledge and learning, during the course.
- Ensure that candidates meet any prerequisites for the courses, which are best evidenced in their DLOG. Scrutiny should be made of Learn to Lead candidates, who need to be competent belayers and have sufficient climbing experience to safely participate in the course.
- The Rock Skills scheme is a personal proficiency scheme providing a progressive pathway to skill acquisition. The scheme benefits both recreational climbers and those considering the instructor qualifications. It is important to stress that Rock Skills courses are not designed for leadership or instructional purposes and should not be used as such. It is NOT a qualification.
- Rock Skills courses are not assessed, and no statement of competence is awarded or can be assumed. However, it is important to clearly state that these are skills training courses and that further consolidation and development of skills will be needed along the pathway to achieving competence in all aspects. On completion of a Rock Skills courses a certificate of attendance is provided.
- The minimum contact hours stated for each course must be met and this should exclude travel time. Additional time may be required for inexperienced candidates.
- Courses can be delivered in a flexible way comprising of evening sessions, day sessions, one consecutive block or spread out over several visits. It can positively benefit the learning experience to split the course over time, to allow for repetition, assimilation and practice. It will also facilitate and give access to the wide range of clients this scheme will attract.
- Introduce the syllabus progressively and in response to the needs of the candidates. Rock Skills are predominantly practical courses and it is important that candidates are given enough time for practice, feedback, demonstrations and coaching where appropriate.
- Course staff must manage risk in partnership with the candidates to ensure safety is maintained while also developing the candidates' skills and understanding.
- Careful consideration should be given to selecting appropriate venues that best facilitate learning when in a classroom type setting and climbing in an indoor or outdoor setting.

- Ensure learners are equipped with the correct equipment, understand the syllabus content and are aware of the purpose of the personal proficiency scheme.
- Be consistent in your use of correct terminology, involve all participants, allow for mistakes and decisions to be made, evaluate performance, observe, question and make it fun and safe.
- Support and reinforce the outdoor learning with some indoor sessions.

SYLLABUS GUIDANCE

There are four levels of Rock Skills:

Rock Skills introduction (8 hrs minimum contact time)

Rock Skills Intermediate (16 hrs minimum contact time)

Rock Skills Learnt to Lead Sport (16 hrs minimum contact time)

Rock Skills Learn to Lead Trad (16 hrs minimum contact time)

Each Rock Skills level is structured around the 6 core areas:

1. Background & Planning
2. Climbing Skills
3. Footwear & Equipment
4. Technical Skills
5. Environmental Knowledge
6. Hazards & Emergency Procedures.

Guidance will be given for each level and we have tried to minimise the amount of duplication whilst trying to create a document that is easy for you to use. Please read all guidance to gain an overview of the scheme in its entirety.

Review candidates' prior learning as they enter the Rock Skills scheme, particularly if they are opting to bypass one or more of the levels. By the end of the course, endeavour to bring all candidates up to speed on any aspects of previous courses they may have missed.

COURSE SIZE

	Course size	Max. ratio
Rock Skills Introduction	Min. 2, Max. 12	1:6
Rock Skills Intermediate	Min. 2, Max. 8	1:4
Rock Skills Learn to Lead Sport	Min. 2, Max. 6	1:3
Rock Skills Learn to Lead Trad	Min. 2, Max. 6	1:3

ROCK SKILLS INTRODUCTION

Minimum contact time: 8 hours

1. Background and Planning

- 1.1 Overview of the climbing and bouldering areas of the UK and Ireland.
- 1.2 Use of guidebooks, mobile devices and online resources.
- 1.3 Crag etiquette.
- 1.4 The work of the mountaineering councils.

Training

In order to promote the sense of adventure and exploration of new climbing areas, introduce candidates to a range of resources, devices and guidebooks to encourage research of new areas. To promote self-led learning, set preparatory tasks where candidates research local and national climbing areas, the mountaineering councils, the work they do and services they provide, which they can then share with the group. Allow candidates to use guidebooks when visiting climbing venues, use case studies and talk through your own decision making when at the crag.

Key teaching points

- Outline the work of and benefits of mountaineering councils and associated clubs.
- Give participants practical experience of using a guidebook to access and find routes.
- Emphasise expected crag etiquette.
- Discuss and demonstrate how to minimise impact on the venue and other users.

2. Climbing Skills

- 2.1 Fundamental movement skills – agility, balance and coordination as the foundation of climbing movement.
- 2.2 Climbing style – an introduction to footwork, handholds and climbing.

Training

Introduce the key elements in an integrated way, being mindful not to over coach at this early stage. Emphasise fun in challenge, through appropriate task setting and as part of the overall climbing activity. Provide several take away activities to encourage continued participation. Give demonstrations of movement skills and provide links for review purposes.

Key teaching points

- Highlight the importance of: agility, balance and coordination.
- Practice and drill movement skills.

3. Footwear and Equipment

- 3.1 Footwear selection – rock shoe comfort and suitability for climbing outside.
- 3.2 Equipment selection and functions – harness, helmets, clothing, ropes, belay devices, locking karabiners, bouldering pads.

Training

Allow plenty of time for practice in the use and fitting of climbing equipment. Provide reading materials and resources for study. Consider visiting a shop or website with a set of questions to ask and a list relevant criterion when choosing equipment.

Key teaching points

- Ensure correctly fitted personal climbing equipment.
- Encourage routine harness/belay check of self and peers.
- Discuss the function of various items of climbing equipment.

4. Technical Skills

- 4.1 Ropework – knots for tying on and attaching to simple anchors, rope management.
- 4.2 Belaying – top and bottom rope belaying, holding falls and lowering.
- 4.3 Spotting – with and without pads, landings, position of pads, effective spotting and its limits.
- 4.4 Abseiling – complete an abseil with a safety back up.

Training

This is a major syllabus area deserving of much attention to ensure accurate techniques are learnt and practised, thus providing solid foundations on which to build. Back up the candidates when they are belaying, lowering and holding falls. Take a controlled and progressive approach to teaching candidates how to hold falls using top and bottom rope systems, whilst under close supervision. Further consolidation and development of skills may be required post-course. Encourage candidates to seek further guidance and support from councils, clubs or further instruction.

Key teaching points

- Drill participants on correctly tied knots.
- Ensure they understand the limitations of spotting when bouldering.
- Refer to manufacturer's guidance when using technical equipment.
- Support them to be vigilant when belaying, with at least one hand on the dead rope.
- Participants must have two hands on the dead rope when lowering and abseiling.
- Promote routine peer to peer check of; harness, screw gates, knots and belay device prior to committing to an abseil or climb.

5. Environmental Knowledge

- 5.1 Understand the impact of climbers at the crag.
- 5.2 Environmental considerations when climbing.
- 5.3 Leave no trace and positive impact ethos.
- 5.4 Access considerations when climbing.

Training

To maintain access to climbing areas it is important to make new climbers aware of the ongoing work required to maintain access to climbing areas, the impact of climbers and what action can be taken to improve and conserve the resource. To this end throughout the course, involve candidates in decision making where possible, encourage appropriate actions and behaviours e.g. carpooling, researching the venue. Use case studies to develop empathy with and ownership of the issues.

Key teaching points

- Encourage respectful and considerate behaviour.
- Demonstrate and verbalise your decision making.

6. Hazards and Emergency Procedures

- 6.1 Identifying potential hazards at climbing and bouldering venues.
- 6.2 Managing risk while bouldering.
- 6.3 Gaining an understanding of common injuries.
- 6.4 Calling for help.
- 6.5 Understanding how Mountain Rescue is organised in the UK and Ireland.

Training

Highlight the hazards and risks associated with climbing and raise awareness and understanding by providing case studies for review. Verbalise hazards and risks as they present themselves and describe how to avoid and manage them, including incident and accident procedure. Set scenarios to promote decision making. Ask candidates to research Mountain Rescue prior to the course and let them present their findings and share resources to reinforce the learning. Use quizzes as an informal way to impart knowledge.

Key teaching points

- Outline hazards and risks & practice how to identify and manage them.
- Stress the importance of personal safety and the need for routine checks of self and peers.

ROCK SKILLS INTERMEDIATE

Minimum contact time: 16 hours

Note: Please see earlier guidance and include and reinforce topics from the earlier level where required.

1. Background and Planning

- 1.1 Choosing a suitable venue.
- 1.2 Use of guidebooks, mobile devices and online resources.
- 1.3 Crag etiquette.
- 1.4 The climbing partnership – importance of trust and knowledge within a climbing partnership.
- 1.5 The work of the Mountaineering Councils.

Training

As for Rock Skills Introduction plus the introduction of alternative sources of information. Develop their understanding of the importance of the climbing partnership and the responsibility of the belayer in this partnership. Prior to the course, determine the entry level of candidates and their prior knowledge. During the course reinforce content from the previous level and fill in any gaps in knowledge.

Key teaching points

- Use guidebooks to select routes and appropriate venues.
- Discuss the responsibilities of being in a climbing partnership, paying attention to: belaying, lowering and safety, impact on performance, peer to peer checks and building trust and experience.

2. Climbing Skills

- 2.1 Warming up and avoiding injuries.
- 2.2 Developing movement skills – body position and techniques for steeper terrain.
- 2.3 Climbing style – widening the repertoire of climbing moves.

Training

Observe and analyse candidates' movement repertoire, set plenty of tasks and allocate time for practice. Stress the importance of a proper warm up, its positive impact on performance and its role in injury prevention. Provide links to appropriate videos on warm up routines and movement techniques.

Key teaching points

- Integrate a range of movement skills by selecting routes that demand a variety of moves and climbing styles.

- Encourage efficient movement by focussing on the correct position of the centre of gravity, keeping weight on the feet and accurate footwork.
- Highlight the differences between indoor climbing technique and rock climbing technique; different sized footholds, weight distribution, different amounts of friction etc.

3. Footwear and Equipment

- 3.1 Footwear selection – rock shoe fit and type for improved performance.
- 3.2 Technical equipment – an introduction to climbing protection.

Training

Introduce climbing protection, focusing on its use, properties, pros and cons. Highlight the available types of climbing protection and hierarchy of threads, spikes, passive, dynamic and in-situ protection. This should include discussion around prioritising gear and when to select one type over another based on the circumstances and the quality of the placements available.

Key teaching points

- Bring a selection of shoes and climbing protection and/or visit a shop.
- Describe the hierarchy of climbing protection from threads to spikes to passive to dynamic to in-situ protection.

4. Technical Skills

- 4.1 Anchors and runners – how to select and place sound anchors and remove runners.
- 4.2 Ropework – attaching to anchors for top-rope systems, setting up top and bottom-rope systems, managing the rope and rigging for abseils.
- 4.3 Belaying - belaying a lead climber, belaying from the top and bottom of the crag using top-rope systems.
- 4.4 Holding falls and lowering – holding a lead fall and a falling second.
- 4.5 Abseiling – set up and complete a retrievable personal abseil with a prusik back up.

Training

A good amount of training and practice time should be given to this section, with an emphasis on principles, process and function. Participants should be given advice on how to practise in a safe way post course; joining a climbing club will assist them to continue and gather further experience. Teach belaying a lead climber by describing, demonstrating and stressing the key differences to belaying on a bottom or top rope. Do not assume that competence as a bottom or top rope belayer transfers directly to belaying a lead climber.

Teach participants how to hold falls using bottom or top ropes. Belaying a lead climber can be taught by asking candidates to down climb on a top or bottom rope. It is not a requirement that participants take leader falls. Discuss with participants the additional forces involved when belaying a lead climber. Management of your and the participants' personal safety at the top of the crag and when belaying should be verbalised to make participants aware of the risks, hazards and preventative actions. Emphasise the principles of sound belay construction, using the following

memory aid or similar: Anchor – Belay – Climber – Direction – Emotional Care.

Key teaching points

- Critically review and rate gear placements.
- Outline the importance of an attentive and alert belayer.
- Highlight the added responsibility of belaying a lead climber.
- Demonstrate good practice and technique when belaying.
- Holding falls should be carried out in a controlled setting.
- Practise down climbing with the belayer 'lead belaying'.
- Demonstrate rope set ups for abseiling.
- Demonstrate a suitable method for personal abseiling using a safety back-up such as a pruisik.

5. Environmental Knowledge

- 5.1 Understand the impact of climbers at climbing venues.
- 5.2 Environmental considerations when climbing.
- 5.3 Leave no trace and positive impact ethos.
- 5.4 Access considerations when climbing.

Training

As for Rock Skills Introduction:

To maintain access to climbing areas it is important to make new climbers aware of the ongoing work required to maintain access to climbing areas, the impact of climbers and what action can be taken to improve and conserve the resource. To this end throughout the course, involve candidates in decision making where possible, encourage appropriate actions and behaviours e.g. carpooling, researching the venue. Use case studies to develop empathy with and ownership of the issues.

Key teaching points

- Encourage respectful and considerate behaviour.
- Demonstrate and verbalise your decision making.
- Introduce relevant case studies, raise awareness of the needs of other stakeholders and discuss the benefits of communication with landowners.

6. Hazards and Emergency Procedures

- 6.1 Identifying potential hazards at climbing and bouldering venues.
- 6.2 Managing risk when climbing, abseiling & bouldering.
- 6.3 Gaining an understanding of common injuries.
- 6.4 Calling for help.
- 6.5 Understanding how Mountain Rescue is organised in the UK and Ireland.

Training

As for Rock Skills Introduction:

Highlight the hazards and risks associated with climbing and raise awareness and understanding by providing case studies for review. Verbalise hazards and risks as they present themselves and describe how to avoid and manage them, including incident and accident procedure. Set scenarios to promote decision making. Ask candidates to research Mountain Rescue prior to the course and let them present their findings and share resources to reinforce the learning. Use quizzes as an informal way to impart knowledge.

In addition to the above, highlight the hazards presented when belaying a lead climber and setting up abseils and top and bottom rope systems.

Key teaching points

- Outline hazards and risks & practice how to identify and manage them.
- Stress the importance of personal safety and the need for routine checks of self and peers.
- Emphasise personal safety at the top of the crag.
- Emphasise the responsibilities involved in belaying a lead climber.
- Focus on incident and accident procedure.

ROCK SKILLS LEARN TO LEAD SPORT

Minimum contact time: 16 hours

Note: Please see earlier guidance and include & reinforce topics from the earlier levels where required.

1. Background and Planning

- 1.1 Selecting suitable venues and routes.
- 1.2 Use of guidebooks, mobile devices and online resources.
- 1.3 Crag etiquette.
- 1.4 The climbing partnership – importance of trust and knowledge within a climbing partnership.
- 1.5 Decision making – understanding risk evaluation and management.
- 1.6 The work of the mountaineering councils.

Training

Integrate risk evaluation and management holistically, rather than as a separate module. It's worth highlighting that certain venues maybe suitable for top rope and bottom rope climbing but not to develop competence in lead climbing.; participants should be informed of the reasons why. Use case studies and a variety of scenarios to present decision making opportunities. Provide support resources to back up the session, e.g. links to mountaineering councils, clubs and details of further training opportunities.

The choice of an appropriate venue and route is a very personal one. The decision is commonly based on the ability and mind-set of the individual concerned but it is important to recognise there may be external influences. With this in mind provide support to the participants when choosing venues and routes to achieve their goal(s). Involve the participants throughout in your decision making and ensure they have a strategy in mind to make appropriate choices independently in the future. Sport climbing locations in the UK and Ireland can be rather unique. Disused quarries and crags close to urban areas are common. Each venue chosen should be critiqued in terms of the desired outcome and risks posed. Introducing case studies and scenarios may support learning.

Key teaching points

- Stress the need for ongoing and dynamic risk assessment.
- Demonstrate good behaviours and give guidance on good practice to manage risks, e.g. provide a link to the National Guidelines for climbing and walking leaders as a reference.
- Involve students in your decision making and provide advice on the selection of suitable venues and routes both during and to help post course choices.

2. Climbing Skills

- 2.1 Movement techniques – safe and assured movement on the lead.
- 2.2 Climbing style – optimising natural rests for clipping bolts.

Training

Determine the ability level of candidates and take an appropriate and progressive approach to introducing lead climbing. This may include deciding that a candidate is not yet ready to lead without back up, or at all. Use a range of strategies to progress and develop the fundamental skills required to lead. This can be done at an appropriate level that permits consolidation at each point and provides sufficient safety and development. Place a strong emphasis on efficient movement and climbing style. Modern trends see an ever-increasing diversity of climbing candidates' skill sets; some have a broad experience base across the disciplines whereas others have only ever experienced one discipline. Determine and respond appropriately to these different climbing backgrounds as each will have different strengths and needs which should be managed.

Key teaching points

- Reinforce fundamental movement skills, such as those covered in the FUNdamentals of Climbing 1 and 2 workshops.
- Encourage efficient clipping; the forehand and backhand methods, using left and right hands.
- Cover how to select a safe clipping position.

3. Equipment

- 3.1 Ropes – choosing a rope for leading, understanding rope specifications and systems.
- 3.2 Technical equipment – selection and function of all gear for sport climbing.

Training

Candidates will need advice on purpose, function and purchasing of technical equipment related to lead sport climbing. Bring a variety of ropes and equipment and or visit a shop. Provide supporting materials, video clips, links and documents to support learning.

Key teaching points

- Encourage discussion on the types and functions of ropes and technical equipment.
- Use different belay devices and discuss their pros and cons.

4. Technical skills

- 4.1 Fixed equipment – recognising types and assessing quality of bolts, pre-clipping first bolts.
- 4.2 Anchors – types, how to rig for top-roping and lowering off.
- 4.3 Ropework – minimising rope drag, attaching to multiple anchors.
- 4.4 Belaying and holding/taking falls – leader and second falls.
- 4.5 Abseiling – set up and complete a retrievable personal abseil with a prusik back up.

Training

Endeavour to visit indoor and outdoor climbing venues with a variety of fixed equipment and anchors. Focus on the principles of sound belay construction, effective rope management, how to lower off sport routes and set up abseils for retreat. Teach belaying of a lead climber and reinforce the responsibility of the belayer. Managing rope drag on single ropes should be the focus, however time permitting, one could discuss the role of double and twin rope systems, but this should be treated as additional material.

Key teaching points

- Be able to safely thread the rope through a variety of lower offs.
- Create a systematic approach to utilising in-situ anchors for abseiling, lowering off, top and bottom roping.
- Cover the key components of safe belaying of a lead climber.
- Demonstrate how to extend runners to manage rope drag.
- Explore lowering off steep/diagonal routes and stripping the route.
- Discuss the use of clip sticks.

5. Environmental Knowledge

- 5.1 Understand the impact of climbers at climbing venues.
- 5.2 Environmental considerations when climbing.
- 5.3 Leave no trace and positive impact ethos.
- 5.4 Access considerations when climbing.

Training

As for Rock Skills Introduction:

To maintain access to climbing areas it is important to make new climbers aware of the ongoing work required to maintain access to climbing areas, the impact of climbers and what action can be taken to improve and conserve the resource. To this end throughout the course, involve candidates in decision making where possible, encourage appropriate actions and behaviours e.g. carpooling, researching the venue. Use case studies to develop empathy with and ownership of the issues.

As well as the above, cover the additional impact of lead climbing and the needs of other users.

Key teaching points

- Encourage respectful and considerate behaviour.

- Demonstrate and verbalise your decision making.
- Introduce relevant case studies, raise awareness of the needs of other stakeholders and discuss the benefits of communication with landowners.

6. Hazards and Emergency Procedures

- 6.1 Identifying potential hazards at climbing venues.
- 6.2 Gaining an understanding of common injuries.
- 6.3 What do to in the event of an incident and managing common problems.
- 6.4 Calling for help.
- 6.5 Understanding how Mountain Rescue is organised in the UK and Ireland.

Training

Use case studies, scenarios and supporting literature to develop an understanding and awareness of common hazards and how best to manage incidents. Place emphasis on the additional risk involved in lead climbing and belaying. Focus on problem avoidance and the need to respond quickly and appropriately to the changing conditions.

Key teaching points

- Focus on a procedure to manage incidents.
- Recommend some extra first aid training to support their knowledge.
- Solve simple and common problems.
- Stress the need to call for help early.

ROCK SKILLS LEARN TO LEAD TRAD

Minimum contact time: 16 hours

Note: Please see earlier guidance and include and reinforce topics from the earlier levels where required.

1. Background and Planning

- 1.1 Selecting suitable venues and routes.
- 1.2 Use of guidebooks, mobile devices and online resources.
- 1.3 Crag etiquette.
- 1.4 The climbing partnership – importance of trust and knowledge within a climbing partnership.
- 1.5 Decision making – understanding risk evaluation and management.
- 1.6 The work of the Mountaineering Councils.

Training

As for Rock Skills Learn to Lead Sport, plus an emphasis on the increased risks of leading trad climbs and the responsibilities of the climber, their second and the venue. Emphasise the use of guidebooks to aid selection of suitable venues and appropriate routes suited to their individual needs. Placing trad protection can have a long term impact on the environment. These issues are worth discussing especially as finding solid anchors and remaining sympathetic to the environment can be challenging. The leader is highly dependent on their partner. The importance of the climbing partnership should be highlighted. Partners can provide physical and emotional support for the leader and potentially deal with problems before they arise. It is important that participants recognise the role they have as leaders and seconds.

Key teaching points

- Stress the need for ongoing and dynamic risk assessment.
- Demonstrate good behaviours and give guidance on good practice to manage risks, e.g. provide a link to the National Guidelines for climbing and walking leaders as a reference.
- Involve students in your decision making and provide advice on the selection of suitable venues and routes both during and to help post course choices.
- How to select suitable venues and routes to match ability.
- The role of the second in the climbing partnership.
- How to assess the impact of environmental conditions such as the weather.

2. Climbing Skills

- 2.1 Movement techniques – safe and assured movement on the lead, climbing in a more efficient style.
- 2.2 Climbing style – optimising natural rests for placing gear.

Training

As for Rock Skills Learn to Lead Sport, with emphasis on the transition to natural rock, if required. Take a progressive approach and work on the component skills required before starting to lead. This may potentially mean that some students do not lead a route during the course. Candidates should be made aware of this at the start of the course. The difficulty and nature of the climbing can have a huge influence on the ability of students to take part. A range of movement techniques should be taught to improve confidence and facilitate safer and more efficient climbing.

Key teaching points

- Reinforce fundamental movement skills, such as those covered in the FUNdamentals of Climbing 1 and 2 workshops.
- Encourage efficient clipping; the forehand and backhand methods, using left and right hands.
- Cover how to select a safe clipping position.
- Stress the importance of climbing in a solid, assured manner when leading.
- Discuss conserving energy when leading including using an efficient position when placing protection on the lead.
- Encourage constant risk assessment of the climber's position using a traffic light system.

3. Equipment

- 3.1 Ropes – choosing a rope for leading and understanding rope specifications and systems.
- 3.2 Technical equipment - selection and function of all gear, contents of a lead rack and how to carry it.

Training

As for Rock Skills Learn to Lead Sport, plus the candidates will need advice on purpose, function and purchasing of technical equipment related to leading trad climbs. Bring a variety of ropes and equipment and/or visit a shop. Provide supporting materials, video clips, links and documents to support learning. Participants should be made aware of a range of rope types and systems and choose one to suit. This should involve single and half rope use. The advantages and disadvantages should be discussed for each. It is ideal if these systems can be used on the course in a range of different situations. The importance of marrying up the rope, device and intended use is worth highlighting.

Participants should be introduced to a range of commonly used trad lead climbing equipment during the course. This will include passive protection, cams and slings. It is also important to differentiate between equipment suited to sport and trad lead climbing. Attention should be given to its

appropriate use and maintenance aligned to manufacturers' guidance. It is ideal if various carrying methods can be covered during the course outlining the pros and cons of each.

Key teaching points

- Introduce a range of trad climbing equipment.
- Explore the limitations of the equipment.
- Encourage participants to consult manufacturers' guidance.

4. Technical Skills

- 4.1 Runners – selection and placement of suitable gear to protect leader and second.
- 4.2 Anchors – choosing the best anchor available.
- 4.3 Ropework – minimising rope drag, attaching to multiple anchors.
- 4.4 Belaying and holding falls – leader and second falls.
- 4.5 Abseiling – set up and complete a retrievable personal abseil with a prusik back up and locking off to retrieve gear.

Training

As for Rock Skills Intermediate and Rock Skills Learn to Lead Sport. Provide demonstrations and allow for plenty of practice when placing gear. Focus on the principles of sound belay construction that can be applied to a range of situations, by using the 'Anchor - Belay - Climber - Direction - Emotional care' memory aid or similar. Point out the need for good belayer positioning to protect against falling objects and from zippering the leader's gear if they fall.

As many more candidates are now coming from a sport climbing background where leader falls are common and sitting on bolts to rest is standard, it will be important to highlight to participants that this behaviour will not transfer well to trad climbing, especially where they have limited experience of placing gear. Belaying and holding falls requires close supervision in a controlled situation, where a top/bottom rope backup can be provided if required. There should be no requirement to take a leader fall on the course. The functions of personal abseiling should be outlined to include retreat as well as problem solving.

Key teaching points

- Demonstrate good gear placement and provide feedback on participants' placements.
- Demonstrate how to lock off belay devices.
- Demonstrate good belayer positioning.
- Demonstrate and explain anchor redundancy and critical links.

5. Environmental Knowledge

- 5.1 Understand the impact of humans at climbing venues.
- 5.2 Environmental considerations when climbing.
- 5.3 Leave no trace and positive impact ethos.
- 5.4 Access considerations when climbing.

Training

As for Rock Skills Introduction:

To maintain access to climbing areas it is important to make new climbers aware of the ongoing work required to maintain access to climbing areas, the impact of climbers and what action can be taken to improve and conserve the resource. To this end throughout the course, involve candidates in decision making where possible, encourage appropriate actions and behaviours e.g. carpooling, researching the venue. Use case studies to develop empathy with and ownership of the issues.

As well as the above, cover the additional impact of lead climbing and the needs of other users.

Key teaching points

- Encourage respectful and considerate behaviour.
- Demonstrate and verbalise your decision making.
- Introduce relevant case studies to raise awareness of the needs of other stakeholders and discuss the benefits of communication with landowners.

6. Hazards and Emergency Procedures

- 6.1 Identifying potential hazards at climbing venues.
- 6.2 Gaining an understanding of common injuries.
- 6.3 Take appropriate action in the event of an incident, accident or common occurrences.
- 6.4 Calling for help.
- 6.5 Understanding how Mountain Rescue is organised in the UK and Ireland.

Training

Use case studies and scenarios of incidents and common problems and provide supporting literature for incident management, including incident and accident procedure. This will help develop an understanding and awareness of hazards and how best to manage incidents. Place emphasis on the additional risk involved in lead climbing and belaying. Focus on problem avoidance and the need to respond quickly and appropriately to the changing conditions.

Key teaching points

- Focus on a procedure to manage incidents.
- Recommend some extra first aid training to support their knowledge.
- Solve simple and common problems.
- Stress the need to call for help early.