



Mountain Training

Development Coach

Candidate handbook





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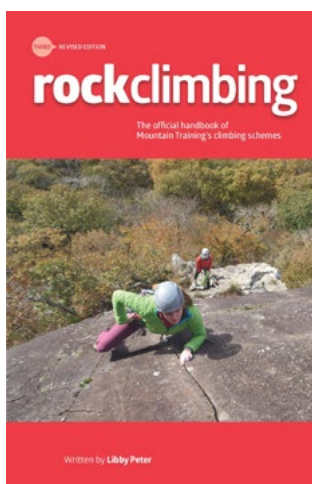
Preface

This handbook has been designed to support candidates through Mountain Training's Development Coach qualification. It contains useful information about the various stages in the qualification as well as the syllabus and guidance notes.

Mountain Training recognises that walking, climbing, and mountaineering are activities that have associated risks. Mountain Training's instructional qualifications provide training and assessment to help coaches develop the skills to manage the risks associated with the environment in which they operate and to enable new participants to have positive experiences.

All instructors and coaches owe a heightened duty of care to the people they lead, their colleagues, and the wider public who may be impacted by their actions.

Mountain Training qualified coaches will act in the best interests of their group, individual group members and others, and they will always act within their competence to prevent harm to them.



Rock Climbing

Rock Climbing by Libby Peter has been written to support developing climbers and coaches. It is packed with essential information and techniques, particularly the following chapters: Chapter 3 Warming up and avoiding injuries, Chapter 4 Movement skills, Chapter 5 Improving your climbing, Chapter 13 Inspiring others and Chapter 20 The law and risk management.



1. Qualification pathway

1.1 Introduction

The Development Coach qualification focuses on the development of climbers over a series of sessions. As a coach you will add to your existing coaching skills and learn how to deliver 'climber-centred coaching' to individuals as part of a group.

1.2 Scope of the qualification

A qualified Development Coach can:

- Plan and deliver a series of sessions to a group of intermediate climbers.
- Coach using a climber-centred approach.

1.2.1 Terrain

The location in which a Development Coach can deliver their sessions depends on their other qualification(s). A Development Coach must be appropriately experienced and qualified to supervise safe sessions in the environment in which they choose to coach e.g. a site-specific sign-off by a Technical Advisor for bouldering; a Climbing Wall Instructor for roped climbing; Climbing Wall Development Instructor for coaching lead climbing or Rock Climbing Instructor to coach on single pitch crags etc.

1.2.2 Exclusions

The qualification does not cover:

- The safety skills of climbing or mountaineering
- Group supervision

(both of these are covered by Mountain Training's climbing instructor qualifications or a site-specific sign off)



1.3 Stages in the qualification

1.3.1 Registration prerequisites

- You must be at least 18 years old.
- You must have at least 12 months personal climbing experience.
- You must have completed Foundation Coach training, or been granted direct entry to Development Coach through the Accredited Prior (APL) process with Mountain Training UK & Ireland.

1.3.2 Training prerequisites:

- You must be registered on the qualification.
- You must have attended the FUNdamentals of Climbing 1 and 2 workshops. Many candidates find attendance on the Physical Training for Climbing 1 and the FUNdamentals of Climbing 3 workshops help them get more from the course.

1.3.3 Consolidation period:

Variety really is the spice of life when it comes to developing coaching skills. Every opportunity should be taken to encourage exploration and ideally practise, the skills learned during training as soon after the training course as possible.

The standard at assessment is high and coaches need plenty of targeted experience to consolidate their learning.

The provider who delivered your training will be able to give you feedback and a personalised action plan for your consolidation period.

There is currently no time limit on the validity of a training course and some candidates may take several years to complete the qualification.



Our association can help you as you work towards one of our qualifications. We are building a community of confident and expert leaders, instructors and coaches, that we hope you will join.



1.3.4 Assessment prerequisites:

- You must have attended a Development Coach training course (or have your prior learning accredited by Mountain Training).
- You must have updated DLOG with your climbing coaching experience to include a minimum of 40 coaching sessions since attending training.
- You must have added reflective observations for at least 10 of these coaching sessions in the 'Description' box.
- You must have prepared a number of progressive session plans for your long-term students.
- You must have completed a home paper.
- You must have completed a Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport module.
- You must be appropriately experienced and qualified to supervise safe sessions in the environment in which you choose to coach. E.g. a site specific sign-off by a Technical Expert for bouldering; a Climbing Wall Instructor for roped climbing; Climbing Wall Development Instructor for coaching lead climbing and Rock Climbing Instructor to coach on single pitch crags.

1.3.5 First aid

It is the responsibility of the coach and/or their employers to evaluate their likely role and the type of situations that they can reasonably expect to encounter and to maintain current appropriate first aid training and qualifications.

In the case of Development Coaches working with a site-specific accreditation, it is the responsibility of the climbing wall management and the technical expert to ensure that adequate first aid provision is readily available.

1.3.6 Safeguarding

Children and vulnerable adults deserve to enjoy their sport in a safe and inclusive environment. It is an essential requirement that coaches attend a recognised workshop for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults in sport. As a consequence, coaches will have a raised awareness of the tell-tale signs of abuse, and develop the tools and confidence required to deal with any issues sensitively, appropriately and effectively should the need ever arise. A coach should be able to identify and recognise good coaching practice, understand values and feelings in relation to abuse and recognise their potential impact on a response.

Nationally recognised courses are regionally available from UK Coaching amongst other providers.



1.3.7 Accredited prior learning

We want to make it easy for experienced and active coaches currently working at a high level to access our coaching qualifications at the most appropriate point.

If you have extensive prior learning through an equivalent coaching qualification, and current experience of coaching climbing, you may be able to apply for Accredited Prior Learning (APL). Coaches from another sport who have completed equivalent coach education courses may be able to gain exemption from Foundation Coach training and go straight to either Foundation Coach assessment or Development Coach training.

All applications for APL will be reviewed by Mountain Training UK & Ireland.

2. Course structure

2.1 Training

Training will involve a minimum of 16 hours contact time. Courses are usually run over two days, with evening sessions if required.

Results: Completed, Not yet completed, Withdrew, Did not show, Exemption.

2.2 Assessment

Assessments are usually bespoke and you should contact a provider about arranging your assessment. As a result there may not be many listed on the course finder.

Assessment will involve a minimum of four hours contact time and will include two coaching sessions; one with your own long term climbers and one with unknown climbers.

Results: Pass, Defer, Withdrew, Did not show.

3. Course delivery

3.1 Training

Course directors are approved by Mountain Training UK & Ireland.

Min. course size: 4, max. course size: 10, max. ratio: 1:10.



3.2 Assessment

Course directors are approved by Mountain Training UK & Ireland.

Max. ratio: 1:1 during practical assessment.

4. Awarding organisation

Mountain Training UK & Ireland



Syllabus and guidance notes



The Development Coach qualification is designed for independent coaches who will prepare for and deliver a structured progression in 'climber-centred coaching' over a series of sessions.

Often working with Foundation Coaches, a Development Coach is able to take a mentoring role and lead in the review process to promote reflective coaching practice.

This syllabus builds on the competencies of the Foundation Coach, such that candidates who gain direct entry should ensure they are familiar with the Foundation Coach syllabus and be proficient in these skills.



Coaching development

The coaching content of the Development Coach qualification takes the skills of the Foundation Coach to a more sophisticated level to enable delivery of a series of sessions, and match the delivery to the needs of developing climbers. This may range from working with just one climber to coaching a range of individuals within a group.

1. Coaching behaviours

- 1.1 Identify the different ways people learn new skills and concepts and demonstrate appropriate coaching.
- 1.2 Identify and understand the roles and responsibilities of a Foundation Coach and Development Coach.
- 1.3 Demonstrate flexibility in coaching by responding to changing circumstances.

Guidance

Coaching development in improvers is fundamentally different to coaching novices and this is to be understood and embraced. As a Development Coach you should understand the learning journey and the practical stages in skill acquisition. Furthermore, you should understand how you need to adapt and change your delivery to suit learners at different stages, sometimes within the same group or even session.

2. Planning

- 2.1 Assess the abilities and objectives of the individual and the participating group.
- 2.2 Plan a session and series of sessions that have suitable goals, progression and evaluation.
- 2.3 Be aware of and comply with current legislation regarding children and vulnerable people.



Guidance

Detailed and structured planning is only possible once a coach has established the starting point and the key priorities. The skills of questioning, observation and analysis are key to planning your coaching sessions. Using video as a data capture tool in this process can complement the analytical skills and technical understanding of coaches and climbers alike.

You are then responsible for the planning and goal setting for both groups and individuals over a series of sessions. This requires a more detailed understanding of the learning journey and the stages in a climber's progression, and a focused structure to plan development.

3. Preparing and concluding

- 3.1 Brief individuals and the group appropriately.
- 3.2 Issue appropriate rock climbing equipment and check correct fitting and use.
- 3.3 Store equipment appropriately after each session.

Guidance

Going beyond the simple delivery of 'one size fits all' when managing safety is all about adapting to learning styles and developmental stages. Techniques should be selected to suit learning objectives and desired outcomes for the session, as well as responding to the developing needs of the climbers.

4. Managing

- 4.1 Demonstrate an ability to work with other coaches and assistants.
- 4.2 Show an awareness of group management strategies and techniques.
- 4.3 Demonstrate an understanding of how to avoid common problems.
- 4.4 Be aware of how a climber's personal life may affect participation and performance.
- 4.5 Understand and be able to facilitate experiential learning.
- 4.6 Understand possible implications of sport/competition on self-confidence.



Guidance

Whilst you, as a Development Coach, may have overall responsibility for the structured progression of a series of sessions, you may at times hand over the delivery of a particular session or group to a Foundation Coach. Hence it is really important that you have set clear learning objectives and outcomes for each session, and are able to brief an assistant coach accordingly.

Development Coaches are responsible for the motivation, development and welfare of the climbers over a series of sessions and it is important that you have an understanding of diversity and inclusivity, in order to deliver coaching in a safe and supportive environment for all participants.

Within the delivery of climber-centred coaching sessions, it is important to recognise the needs for individual practice and learning and the effects this can have on motivation and performance.

5. Sporting values

- 5.1 Help develop a positive attitude towards climbing and lifelong participation.
- 5.2 Develop basic teamwork between individuals.
- 5.3 Develop communication between climber, coach and peers.
- 5.4 Develop a sporting approach to competition, e.g. fair play and humility.
- 5.5 Develop the climber's awareness of the climbing environment and the ethics of the sport.
- 5.6 Encourage participation in a variety of climbing activities as well as other sports.

Guidance

For some, climbing may be the vehicle they use to develop their core athletic competencies of agility, balance and coordination. As a result, you must understand the principles of supporting the sporting pathway and appreciate the importance of being a role model. Whilst it is easy to focus on youthful high performance, varied pathways exist and it is important to understand and promote the longer term benefits of a healthy sporting habit for life.



6. Movement skills

- 6.1 Explain, demonstrate and evaluate the fundamental climbing movement principles.
- 6.2 Identify and apply appropriate games and tasks to develop the 'FUNDamentals' of climbing movement.
- 6.3 Observe and analyse students' climbing movements and provide appropriate coaching.

Guidance

As climbers develop, the need for detailed analysis, greater technical understanding of climbing movement, and detailed feedback increases in line with their progress. Hence, the demands on the coach increase. You need to have a high level of technical understanding of the fundamental principles and techniques of climbing movement, even if you do not have a high level of personal climbing proficiency. The skills of observation and technical analysis are essential here, to understand the technical requirements of climbing moves and routes and to be able to record and deliver meaningful feedback to the climber.

Games, drills and practical tasks should be set and selected for their ability to develop these movement skills, and should be tailored to the needs of the individual climber where possible.

7. Physiology

- 7.1 Structure sessions to include appropriate warm-up.
- 7.2 Gauge students' physical fitness and strength and set tasks appropriate to these.
- 7.3 Understand fatigue and how this affects students' performance and their ability to learn.
- 7.4 Identify physical factors which cause students to fail on certain routes.
- 7.5 Have a basic understanding of the body's energy-producing systems.
- 7.6 Have a basic understanding of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems.
- 7.7 Have a basic understanding of bone, muscle, tendon and ligament structures.
- 7.8 Understand the dangers of overtraining for different age groups.



Guidance

The benefits of warming up as a healthy precursor to exercise should be well understood and respected. At Development Coach level it is expected that you can deliver a variety of warm up routines and provide guidance for climbers, to ensure that individuals find healthy habits that suit their needs and preferences.

As a Development Coach you will plan and deliver a series of sessions (typically over six to eight weeks), which allows climbers to make physical gains in their development. At a basic level this may involve the coaching of techniques to develop suppleness and agility, alongside basic strength and conditioning sessions, to improve physical performance and avoid injury.

Coaches who plan and deliver specific training programmes for developing climbers need to have an underlying knowledge of a climber's physiology. This knowledge should enable the optimal planning and delivery of progressive, periodised training programmes, whilst reducing the risk of injury. You should be able to educate climbers on the impact of diet and hydration on performance, and be able to provide guidance and support on these topics. Coaches working with young climbers should be especially aware of the impact of training on young bodies at crucial stages of development.

8. Psychology

- 8.1 Demonstrate knowledge of the stages of skill acquisition.
- 8.2 Identify and adopt the preferred/most effective learning style for each individual.
- 8.3 Motivate and help to maintain students' motivation.
- 8.4 Help students to reduce the negative effects of stress.
- 8.5 Help students to set appropriate long- and short-term goals.
- 8.6 Give appropriate and well-timed feedback.

Guidance

You need to understand the stages of development as a climber progresses from a novice to becoming independent and autonomous. In support of climber centred coaching, it is important that you and your climbers share this knowledge of the learning journey, and that you understand the impact this can have on long-term motivation. Along this journey,



there will be many occasions when a climber will develop particular needs or objectives and a good coach should be able to adapt their style and plans accordingly.

Climbing is a rewardingly psychological challenge, and coaching the skills of decision making and dealing with stress and anxiety are very different, yet just as important, as being able to coach the physical skills of climbing movement. You should understand how to help climbers deal with the psychological and motivational challenges that will arise, and be proficient in giving appropriate advice and feedback to support this development.

9. Tactical

- 9.1 Set tasks to develop students' route-reading skills.
- 9.2 Explain the difference between on-sighting and other tactics, including red-pointing, and help students to develop their skills and judgement in choice of style.
- 9.3 Explain various grading systems and how these might affect tactics, e.g. grading for on-sight vs. red-point, difference between indoor and outdoor grading, bouldering grades.
- 9.4 Set appropriate goals to enhance a climber's motivation.

Guidance

Compared to many sports, climbing is refreshingly (and almost infinitely) varied. Whilst there are fundamental techniques to be mastered, the skill lies in the selection and adaptation of techniques to new and challenging situations. This variety in, and importance of, the tactical aspects of climbing is what motivates many climbers in the longer term.

You need to be able to help climbers embrace these challenges and understand that the skills of route-reading, decision-making and technique selection are distinct from the technical and physical skills which may be more apparent, yet no more important.

When planning the progression and development of these skills, the delivery needs to take place in an environment that stretches the climber and stimulates progression, whilst maintaining and driving motivation. The selection of the appropriate styles and difficulty of climbs and routes are essential skills for coach and climber alike.



10. Motor learning

10.1 Understand stages of motor learning.

10.2 Identify an appropriate time and method to introduce specific techniques.

10.3 Understand the link between feedback and motor learning.

Guidance

As climbers progress from novice to skilled performers, it is important to understand how the fundamental techniques will be learned, encoded, adapted and developed into habits and skilful patterns of behaviour. You should have enough knowledge to be able to adapt your delivery and organise appropriate practice to facilitate this learning in an optimal manner. The structure of practice should be matched to appropriate feedback (both in terms of timing, method and style) to suit the development of each individual climber.





Long term climber development



11. Long term climber development

- 11.1 Create a fun learning environment.
- 11.2 Demonstrate awareness of the benefits of exposure to multiple sports, especially for young climbers.
- 11.3 Select climbs of appropriate difficulty and style for young climbers at various stages of physical maturity.
- 11.4 Encourage appropriate competition between young climbers.
- 11.5 Recognise growth spurts and understand the effects these may have on performance and injury risk.
- 11.6 Understand the factors that lead to long-term participation.

Guidance

Climbing needs to be both fun and stimulating if climbers are going to maintain their motivation and participate in the long term. It is important that you understand how



motivations may change at different stages and ages of a climber's progress. It is important to understand the role that competition can play in the development of young climbers, yet have strategies to help climbers maintain their motivation way beyond aspirations of competition and high performance.

With climbers branching out into many different aspects of climbing and mountaineering, or even transferring their skills into as-yet-undiscovered sports in the future, it is important that you are open minded and encourage transferability and adaptability in early development. This drive and competition needs to be balanced against healthy habits to reduce the risk of injury, especially at crucial stages of development and growth in young climbers.

Reflective practice



12. Giving feedback

12.1 Show understanding of the role of feedback for participants by:

- 12.1.1 demonstrating an awareness of when to give appropriate feedback.
- 12.1.2 providing appropriate feedback for participants and other coaches/assistants.



Guidance

The ability to develop succinct and valuable feedback for climbers and fellow coaches alike is a skill that needs to be practised (like any other) if you are going to improve in this important aspect of your role.

The ability to give valued and worthwhile feedback is just as crucial for a Development Coach as it is for a Foundation Coach. Furthermore, the quality and detail of feedback is likely to be more critical, as climbers make more marginal gains the more skilled they become. You should understand the changes in demands that are made on feedback in a climber-centred coaching relationship. As a climber makes progress, the need for feedback declines and climbers are more likely to look to you for specific input, at a time to suit them. For you as the coach, the giving of feedback is likely to reduce, being replaced by the use of appropriate questioning and challenge as the climbers become more independent in their skills and development.

13. Evaluating

13.1 Understand the reasons for evaluating a session.

13.2 Evaluate the success of a session by:

13.2.1 assessing the appropriateness of the session aims and objectives, and the activities used to achieve them.

13.2.2 contributing effectively to a session review with the coaching team, including self-evaluation.

Guidance

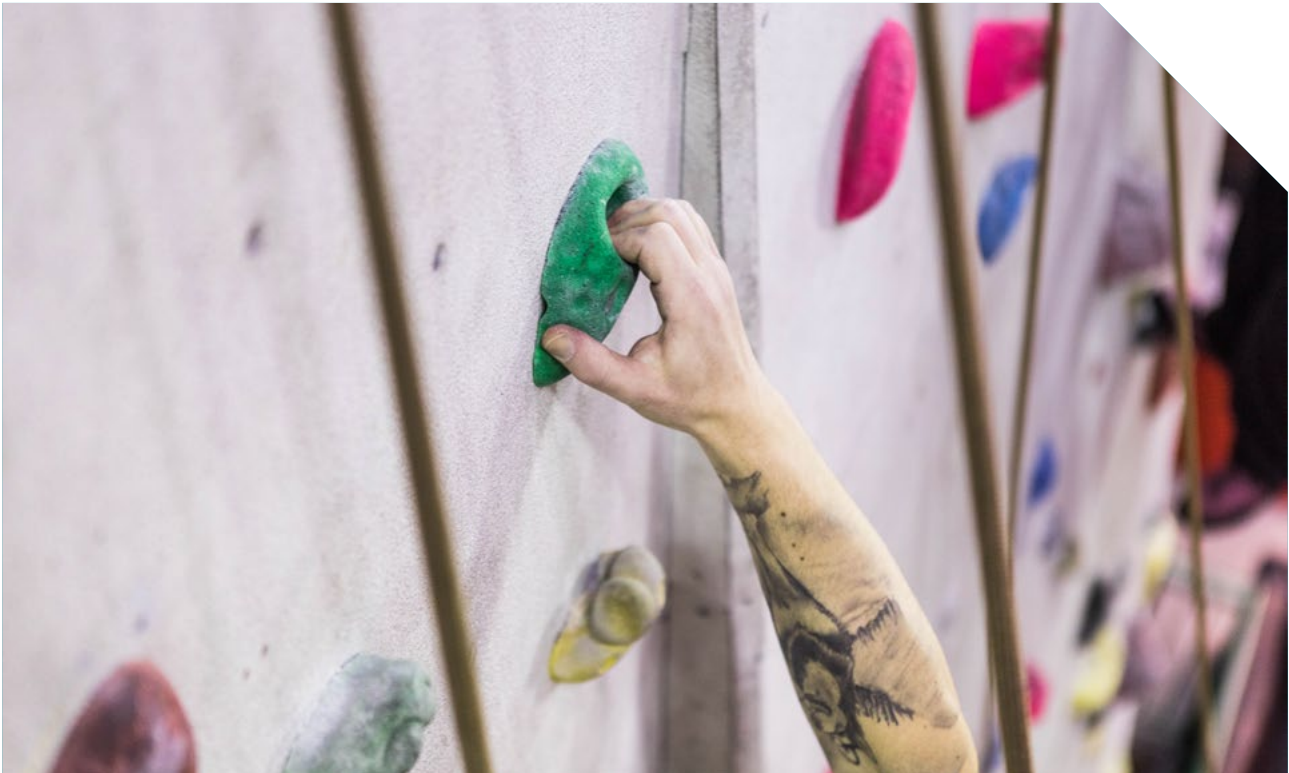
Coaching development in climbers is a dynamic process. The best laid plans will evolve and adapt as progress is made in different ways, or at a different pace, to that which was planned at the outset. It is essential that you have a flexible approach to adopting a reflective style of practice.

Not only is it essential to monitor and reflect upon the development of the climbers, it is helpful to monitor and review the effectiveness of different coaching sessions and ideas in order to continually develop. Sharing this process with Foundation Coaches is imperative to ensure that the coaching team are consistent in their delivery and developing as a team.



Leading in the review and evaluation of sessions is the most influential way of ensuring that sessions are focused on learning outcomes for individual climbers, thus supporting the essence of climber-centred coaching.

Technical competence



14. Personal climbing

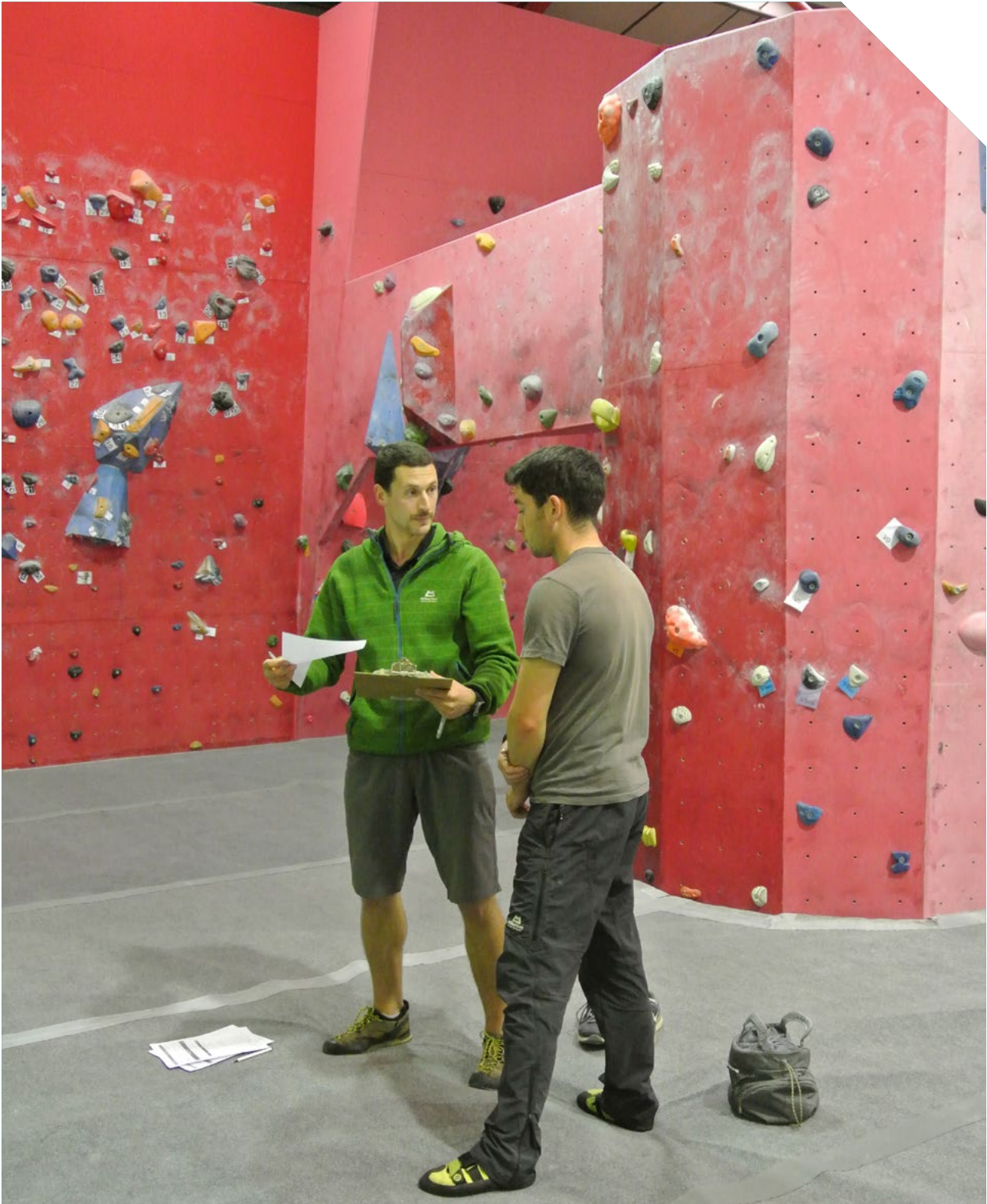
- 14.1 Demonstrate an ability to lead climb at French grade 6a or above and/or
- 14.2 Demonstrate an ability to climb boulder problems at V3 or above.

Guidance

As a coach of the fundamental skills of climbing movement, it is essential that you have enough technical competence and personal experience of climbing to be able to give clear demonstrations of best practice. There is likely to come a day when a climber starts to out-perform you and surpass your technical ability. In addition, it is common for climbers of a different age or body shape, to require input on different ways to solve problems and climb particular routes or moves.



It is important that you have enough technical understanding of climbing to be able to deal with these situations and find alternative ways of providing examples and demonstrations as required. The higher your level of technical climbing competence, the further you will be able to support the development of the climber, before relying on these alternatives.





Appendix 1 - The assessment process

Development Coach assessment courses consist of a thorough review of your logged coaching experience, an evaluation of session planning with structured progression over a number of sessions, and a written paper followed by a final practical assessment.

You must share your digital logbook (DLOG) with the assessor prior to booking onto a course, who will advise you on an appropriate timescale for attending a practical assessment. If it does not demonstrate appropriate coaching experience and/or session planning that meets the required standard, you will not be able to proceed to the practical assessment. For this reason, providers are not in a position to take last minute assessment bookings.

The unknown coaching group will normally consist of two experienced climbers who may be at different levels but make a typical improver coaching group. The content of the coaching session should be appropriate to both climbers, and could incorporate any appropriate aspect of climbing technique.

A typical practical assessment with approximate timings would include:

- Assessor-candidate briefing (30mins)
- Candidate runs coaching session with own climbers (60mins)
- Session review (20mins)
- Break (30mins)
- Candidate meet with unknown climbers to be coached (30mins)
- Candidate runs coaching session with unknown climbers (60mins)
- Session review (20mins)
- Assessor-candidate debrief and delivery of result (30mins)

The exact format and timings for the assessment will be outlined by the provider.

It is common for two candidates to be invited for assessment on the same day. This way you can coach your own clients and then swap clients to fulfil the two practical coaching sessions. Depending on how the provider manages the schedule, the assessment may take up a full day.

When assessing one candidate, a second pair of climbers will be made available by the



provider for the coaching session with unknown climbers.

What to coach at Development Coach assessment

There is not a prescriptive list of topics/techniques to be assessed at Development Coach level. Instead, candidates should be confident in the delivery of progressive coaching sessions to intermediate or improver climbers that could include technical, tactical, physiological or psychological topics.

DLOG entries for Development Coaches

Candidates preparing for Development Coach assessment should have extensive experience of delivering progressive coaching sessions to improving climbers.

A minimum of 40 logged coaching sessions since completing Development Coach training is expected, and may include roped climbing as well as bouldering both indoors and outdoors. These sessions should demonstrate progression and development over a number of weeks.

Reflective comments must be added for at least 10 entries in the 'description' tab. These comments should include an evaluation of the session and demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the coaching process.

Used in this way DLOG can demonstrate progress in your coaching development and be a valuable mechanism through which providers and other experienced coaches can give feedback. If you tick the 'flagged' box you can draw attention to the most relevant entries.

Session planning for Development Coaches

In addition to recording coaching sessions in DLOG, written session plans allow candidates to evidence development in the quality of their coaching. These may take a similar form to the lesson plans used by Foundation Coaches, but would demonstrate progression over a number of sessions, as well as in-depth reflective observations that demonstrate coaching development. This information should be uploaded as files in DLOG, along with other supporting evidence such as examples of written training programmes.



Appendix 2 – Coaching portfolio and session planning

Session planning is an important skill and an underlying tool in developing climber-centred coaching sessions that deliver the desired learning outcomes. It is important to find a system that suits you and suits your style. Furthermore, the planning system should suit the needs of your situation, the needs of your climbers, and facilitate appropriate review and development between you and them.

Whether you choose to view the planning process ‘top down’ (from Performance Coach down to the individual session) or ‘bottom up’ (from the individual session to the long term development), there can be no doubt that the long term development of climbers may come under the care, guidance and coaching of several coaches. It therefore helps to understand, and to be able to explain, where each session fits into the long term picture. It is important for you to develop your own tools, but here are some ideas to help you get started.

Think about the goal setting and session planning session as a nested development – a bit like Russian Matryoshka dolls. Starting with long term plans and aims, it is possible to break the plan down into year-long macro cycles of development. Planning this long term development is usually the remit of the Performance Coach. Within each year, we can break the annual plan down into eight week blocks. Whether these are terms or periods of development leading to assessments or competitions, a climber’s big red-point attempt, or a particular climbing holiday or opportunity, the planning of these blocks is usually the remit of the Development Coach.

Finally, it helps to break each eight-week block down to the individual weeks for the climber. Each week will have a range of complementary sessions to deliver the planned outcomes and development. In turn, each session can be individually planned and delivered. The delivery of this session is often the remit of the Foundation Coach.

Whether we are planning periodised training for an event, or planning a progression through a series of weekly NICAS sessions at a club, the nested session planning model helps to see where each session fits into the big picture, and how coaches of all levels work together.



Appendix 3 – Preparing for assessment

The training courses bring together several strands of a climber's and coach's development: the technical understanding of how to climb, the ability to deliver and supervise appropriate sessions and an understanding of how to coach real people – with all their individual nuances and differences. The aim of the assessments is to holistically evaluate the performance of a coach to be able to take care of all these aspects, and brings all the above strands together.

As with any selection process, thorough preparation is the key to maximising the outcome of your assessment. The old adage of 'failing to prepare is preparing to fail' is certainly true so make sure that you have carefully planned out your session and your objectives, and given some thought to what to do should things not go quite as planned. The more prepared you are the more confident you will feel, and this will make a huge difference to those last-minute nerves.

Your assessment will be conducted by a Mountain Training UK & Ireland approved assessor, whose role is simply to ensure that you are operating at a standard of best practice for coaching.

To better help you prepare for your assessment we have summarised some key points that might be worth thinking about in the lead up to the big day.

- Get off to a good start by making a solid first impression – setting the tone for an assessment can often be a great way of shaking off some early nerves. Start as you mean to go on by being solid and confident in your role as you begin. This can happen even before your session observation starts.
- Be confident – at the point of assessment you will already be an experienced coach. Therefore try to think of your assessment as nothing more than running a session as you normally would. You wouldn't be shy about leading a session at your local centre, so why be shy here? Command your role confidently and you will certainly impress the assessor.
- Communicate well and clearly – make sure that you speak clearly and at a good volume. This will not only put across your excellent coaching tips to everyone in the room but also ensure that everything is clearly understood. This will reduce the likelihood of someone in your session getting the wrong end of the stick. Communication also includes listening so make sure you have time to ask questions of the group and the assessor to ensure that everything is on the right track.
- Don't rush things, take your time! – the assessor will be looking at a snapshot of your coaching skills and therefore is not looking to see you plough through an entire



week's information in 30–45 minutes. It is much better to deliver one or two of your objectives to a high standard than aim for six and lose the quality by rushing through your session.

- Be yourself and not someone you think the assessor wants to see – this will only make you feel more nervous and uncomfortable. We want you to be the best coach you can be on the day, but it's certainly you we are looking for.
- Don't expect everything to go smoothly – you can bet your bottom dollar that on assessment day something will go wrong. Whether it is a tiny issue or something larger, things very rarely go to plan, especially when you are relying on other people's cooperation. Therefore don't worry if things don't go as expected. Try to have a few 'get out of jail' games or activities up your sleeve so if the worst hits you can always fall back on something you know will work well.
- Use notes if needs be – the assessor will be aware that you might be nervous so don't feel that you cannot make any supporting notes to help jog your memory. Flash cards with key coaching points are ideal and can easily be put back in your pocket after you have used them.
- Do your homework – read the syllabus and guidance notes thoroughly and make notes on key points. This is what the assessor will be using during your assessment so in a way it's like us letting you see the exam questions before you take them.

Following the assessment the assessor will provide you with detailed feedback on your performance. This is your time to relax as the stressful part is over and this is the time to discuss your session. Use this time wisely to reflect on what aspects went well and what areas you might want to work on in the future. This is also a great opportunity ask any questions you might have and seek advice if you wish.

In some cases the assessor may wish for you to expand on points they saw during your session. Be prepared for this: be sure to have firmly memorised your session aims so you can link back to them if need be.

In the event that you are deferred, your course director will ensure an effective action plan is created giving you a framework to help you bring those weaker areas up to a high standard. Please be aware that there are no 'part re-assessments' in this qualification and it will be essential to repeat the whole process.



Mountain Training Association

Our association is a membership organisation that can help you as you work towards one of our qualifications.

As a membership association we are building a community of confident and expert leaders, instructors and coaches, that we hope you will join.

We can help you with:

- Big savings on clothing and equipment
- A wide range of accredited development workshops, events and opportunities for continuing personal/professional development
- Specialist mentoring for your qualification
- Regional networks and opportunities to build connections with others in the sector
- The Professional Mountaineer magazine offering advice, tips and guidance from experts and peers within the profession
- Specially negotiated rates for liability insurance for qualified members

Anyone can join from the moment they register for a Mountain Training qualification, and can join anytime when working towards a qualification or when qualified.

Join via your account on the Mountain Training Candidate Management System (Tahdah - CMS).

“The workshops I’ve done have been brilliant and have definitely made me a better leader” Alex, Association member.

“The Association offers an excellent range of CPD, which has given me a broader understanding of the role, skills and expertise required to be a great leader. Definitely recommend.” Charlie, Association member.