



## Leader/Guide Training (**Outdoor recreation**)

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### *A blueprint for quality training*

PACI leader/guide training is designed to prepare trainees for the rigors of conducting adventure based activities at height within a specialist activity context (eg abseiling and/or climbing). Training is intensive and places high demands on trainee guides.

Leadership / Guides training is also an important pre-requisite for instructor training. Those candidates who are successful may wish to progress to instructor training at a later time.

PACI training focusses on practical techniques including the structure, content and sequencing of various roping related activities (eg abseiling sessions, top rope climbing activities and lead climbing activities). There is significant emphasis placed on guiding techniques using competency based methodology.

The emphasis is on how well a trainee can guide/supervise, not how hard the trainee can climb. PACI understands that just because a person is unable to lead climb Australian grade 25+ routes does not mean that person can't become an excellent climbing guide or abseiling leader.

Trainee leaders/guides will all be given opportunities to lead a group of 'clients' in various specialist activities at height – eg multi-pitch lead climbing.

At the conclusion of each activity where a trainee leader/guide was in charge, detailed debriefings are given.

Successful trainees will receive a nationally recognised qualification. This is possible because PACI is a registered training organisation (RTO). Under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), only an RTO can issue nationally recognised qualifications.

In the PACI system of education, leader/guide training consists of four (4) distinct phases as follows:

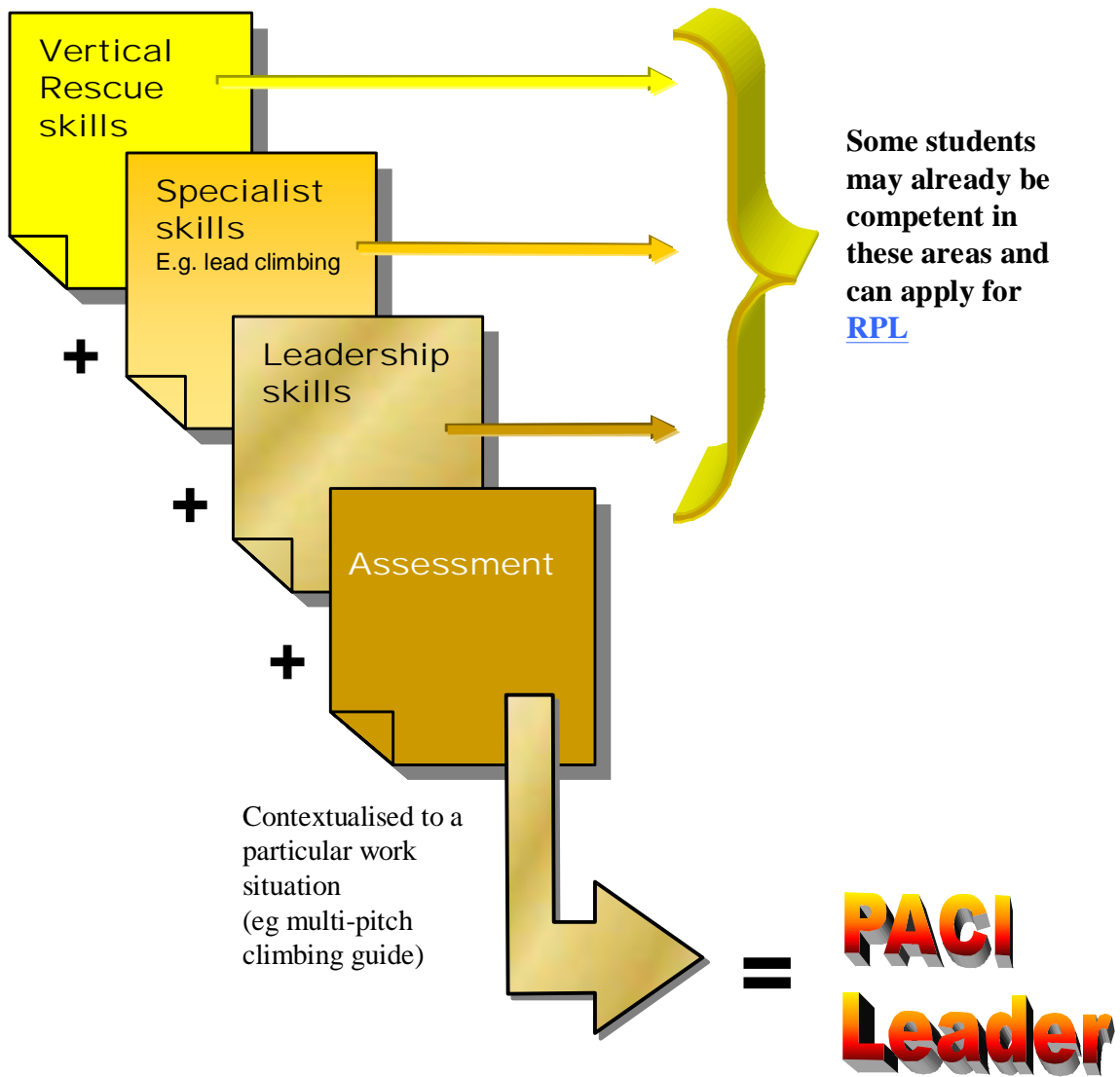
Phase 1 = Vertical rescue training	4 days
Phase 2 = Specialist skills training	Varies (depends on range of specialist skills sought)
Phase 3 = Leadership/guide training	4-7 days (depending on endorsements)
Phase 4 = Assessment	1 day (depends on number of candidates)

The time frames given are the nominal duration and may vary according to the complexity of endorsements (ie activity specialisations) sought. Local weather and difficulty of access to training sites may also affect the nominal duration.

PACI promotes its educational programs and services in line with the legal requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). This means we believe in 'a fair go for all' and do not engage in acts of libel and slander toward our competitors. PACI respects other training organisations and seeks to operate in a business framework of mutual respect.

The PACI leader/guide training flow-chart:

Competency must be demonstrated at each phase before progressing to the next higher phase.

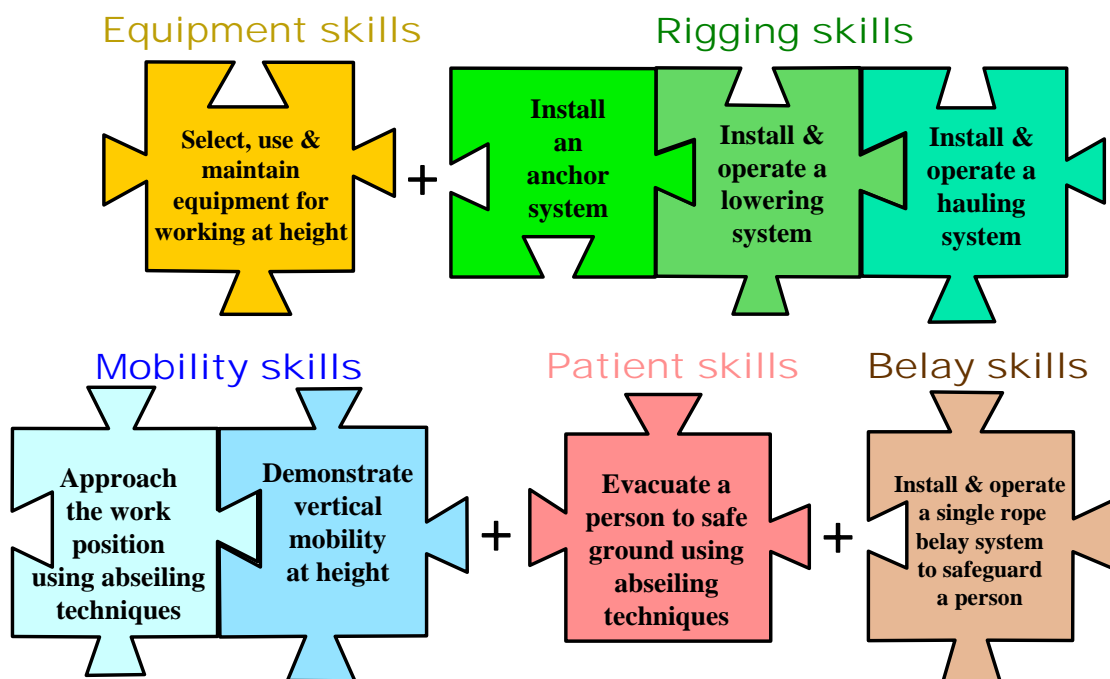


## Phase 1: Vertical rescue training (4 nominal days)

Rescue training lays a solid foundation of core roping skills and is a mandatory requirement for any person intending on supervising and/or instructing others. At this early stage of the leader/guide training cycle, trainees apply their rescue skills within a scenario-based context that is relevant to their needs and future aspirations. Trainees will generally be applying their rescue skills within an indoor, outdoor, abseiling, climbing or high ropes context.

Whichever context is identified, training is generally modelled on the following format with specific skills tailored to suit the required context and environment. The duration of training will also be dependent on the context in which skills are to be applied.

All PACI vertical rescue training (within an outdoor recreation context) includes the following skills:



Your PACI instructor will pitch all training within a context that is realistic and relevant to the trainees needs. For example, trainees with a strong lead climbing focus will typically build anchors using removable protection devices (ie wired nuts, cams etc) and work with what they would normally carry on their harness. Carabiners will normally be alloy and non-locking with only a few locking types.

Trainees with an abseiling focus will typically use trees, boulders and pre-installed bolts (where they exist) to build their anchor systems. Carabiners will normally be locking and there may be a mix of steel and alloy types.

### Typical training plan:

- Day 1: Equipment, knots, anchor systems, abseiling skills, improvised descending systems, descending with a heavy pack.
- Day 2: Vertical mobility skills (ascending, change-overs, knot bypass), retrievable abseil system, using an improvised harness.
- Day 3: Assisted abseil, lowering systems, suspended patient extraction, mechanical advantage
- Day 4: Mechanical advantage systems (continued), accident scenario practice.  
Revision of skills, final assessment (accident scenario requiring a range of skills).

## Phase 2: Specialist skills training (nominal duration varies)

Competency in vertical rescue skills must be demonstrated before beginning training at this level.

Specialist skills training occurs within a particular activity context as identified through careful questioning of the trainee. For example, some trainees may not be interested in climbing or in particular – lead climbing. Others may be interested only in indoor (artificial wall) climbing, while some trainees may be seeking training within a high ropes context only.

Trainees determine which activity specialisations are required and then training is tailored to meet those needs. Generally, training will be either abseiling or climbing related.

Abseiling skills include – multi-pitch abseiling, vertical canyoning, high ropes course, etc

Abseiling training is conducted in the following sequence:

- Abseiling (single-pitch) – embedded as part of vertical rescue training

- Abseiling (multi-pitch) – 2 days nominal

- Canyoning - vertical (multi-pitch) – 2 days nominal

**Note:** Canyoning (multi-pitch) may be conducted as a standalone activity in lieu of the multi-pitch abseiling course. The skills are similar but canyons may include the presence of water and more complex egress once the bottom has been reached.

*Increasing complexity*

Climbing skills include – top rope climbing, lead climbing (single-pitch), lead climbing (multi-pitch), big wall / aid climbing, ice climbing, etc

Climbing training is conducted in the following sequence:

- Top rope climbing – 2 days nominal

- Lead climbing (single-pitch) – 3 days nominal

- Lead climbing (multi-pitch) – 3 days nominal (pre-requisite = single pitch lead climbing)

- Big wall / aid climbing – 3 days nominal (pre-requisite = multi pitch lead climbing)

*Increasing complexity*

Ice climbing is generally conducted after competency has been achieved in vertical rescue & lead climbing (single-pitch) skills. Ice climbing generally involves some rock climbing although special plastic or heavy duty leather boots are normally worn with crampons (spikes). A high degree of self-reliance is required, particularly the ability to retreat from a position high on a mountain and in potentially adverse weather conditions. Ice climbing is obviously only conducted in specific areas of Australia (eg Blue lake near Mt Kosciusko) and in winter/early spring.

### Typical training plan for top rope climbing:

Day 1: Review of exams, equipment for rock climbing, abseiling skills (if not previously learnt), interpreting a guide-book, locating a route, identifying rock features, setting up anchor systems for a bottom belay system, belay skills, safety calls, climbing skills, setting up anchors for a top belay system.

Day 2: Setting up anchors for a top belay system (continued), belay from the top of a route, accurate positioning, ability to ‘escape the belay’, implementing an assisted hoist, further climbing practice.

## Typical training plan for lead climbing (multipitch):

### Notes:

- 1) Routes will typically be 2-5 pitches in length and at a grade that is suited to ability of the trainee. Difficulty in accessing the route and exiting once completed are factored in to overall scope of training. Routes that require abseil descent (ie not possible to walk off) are normally selected as they offer valuable opportunities to practice skills, and create an atmosphere of commitment.
- 2) Maximum student-to-instructor ratio of 3:1 is a practical limit – with 2:1 offering the ideal ratio. Time constraints and ease of control are important considerations during training. Multipitch routes typically require a significant time commitment for each route – particularly if trainees do not have a significant depth and breadth of underpinning experience.
- 3) The duration of training will vary from region to region and according to the difficulty of access to routes. Time of year and resulting weather patterns will also affect the scheduling of training. Rain will normally mean postponement of climbing due to safety concerns.

Day 1: AM - Review of exams, selecting and carrying equipment for lead climbing, ground training rehearsal of double rope technique, ground training rehearsal of setting up belay and managing ropes, selecting a route and assessing options for retreat  
PM - Attempt first multipitch lead route

Day 2: Climbing practice – multipitch routes (using double ropes)

Day 3: AM - Climbing practice – multipitch routes (2-3 pitches at grade suited to ability of trainee)  
PM – Assessment

The specialist skills phase of the leader/guide learning cycle is structured to ensure that trainees are exposed to the broad range of techniques to build a ‘knowledge-base’ from which they can draw from in their professional careers.

Trainees who have had previous abseiling and/or climbing experience will find the transition to leadership training easier as they usually have a greater depth and breadth of experience to draw upon.

Unless a solid base of specialist skills has been acquired, the transition to leadership/guides training will be more difficult, and may have a compounding effect when the next transition to instructor-level training occurs.

As with all specialist roping skills, an ongoing commitment must be made to maintain those skills through regular practice. Long periods of inactivity will lead to a deterioration of skill proficiency, which in turn could result in increased risks – particularly to the public whose safety and enjoyment are dependent on the ability of the guide/instructor.

### **Phase 3: Leadership / Guide training (nominal duration varies)**

Competency in vertical rescue and chosen specialist skills must be demonstrated before beginning training at this level. A person cannot proceed to leader/guide training unless these pre-requisite skills are proven.

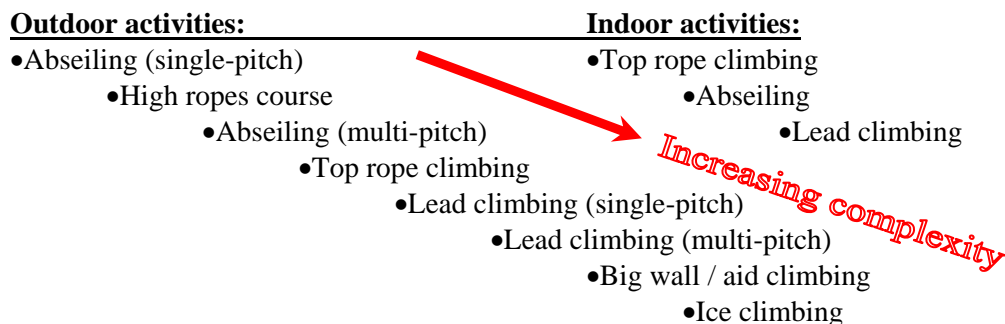
Building on this prerequisite experience, trainees learn how to prepare detailed work plans, conduct risk assessments and lead others in specialist activities that involve exposure to falls from height. Training is concerned with the *application* of skills to ensure that the planned activity is safely and consistently achieved. The term 'safely' is defined as the lowest reasonably achievable risk level.

Training at this level constitutes a departure from pure recreational adventures where the focus is narrowed to a personal level (and perhaps one other partner in the case of rescue). Leadership training now places the trainee guide in the drivers seat with clear duties and responsibilities toward others. The focus is now directed at *managing* others on a recreational activity at height all within defined time constraints. Trainees will be responsible for ensuring that those persons under their care, have an enjoyable and as far as is reasonably possible – a safe experience.

Trainees also learn how to implement and monitor OH&S procedures in consideration of identified hazards and risks in the workplace – the activity site in effect is a *workplace*.

All training is conducted within an activity specific context – eg guiding a small party on a multi-pitch lead climb or guiding a small party on a multi-pitch abseil descent or perhaps conducting a high ropes session for a group of participants.

Activities are arranged within a hierarchy of complexity as follows:



It is assumed that indoor activities are less complex and involve exposure to inherently less risk than the equivalent outdoor activity. For example, lead climbing outdoors requires a higher level of skill and knowledge than lead climbing indoors with bolts. It is also assumed that a guide with outdoor lead climbing endorsements can also conduct top rope climbing and abseiling activities.

During leadership/guides training, the trainee will take charge of a group of 'clients' and guide them through an activity specific context (eg multi-pitch lead climbing). The clients may be real or role-played, depending on the circumstances of the business operator conducting the training. It may not be practicable to wait for real customers to book training as this may not coincide with the time constraints of the trainees undertaking their leadership training. Role-played 'clients' can easily be arranged and carefully briefed to re-create a number of simulated 'problems' which the 'guide' must respond to.

Leadership/guides training will vary from 5-7 nominal days in duration – the exact time frame will be predicted once the trainees needs are identified. As a general guide, the following durations may serve as a useful benchmark:

For outdoor activities:

Abseiling (single-pitch endorsements)	= 4 nominal days
High ropes course activities	= 3 nominal days
Abseiling (multi-pitch endorsements)	= 5 nominal days
Top rope climbing	= 5 nominal days
Lead climbing (single-pitch endorsements)	= 6 nominal days
Lead climbing (multi-pitch endorsements)	= 7 nominal days

These durations will vary according to the locality/region in which training takes place, the number of trainees booked on the course and local access restrictions/difficulties (eg national parks regulations). The nominal durations include the final assessment activity.

Numeracy/literacy pre-requisites:

Speak, read and understand the English language

Trainees must have literacy and numeracy skills at a level sufficient to brief others. This means that trainees must:

- be able to write essays without introducing significant grammatical or spelling errors; and
- be able to read, analyse and interpret technical documents such as standards published by Standards Australia, OH&S legislation published by the government; and
- be able to understand questions asked by others and respond in English that is reasonably clear and of sufficient content to satisfy the original question asked.

Physical / skill pre-requisites:

Fit and healthy for working at height within the chosen specialist activities

Proven capability in vertical rescue and chosen specialist skills (eg lead climbing)

Typical training plan (for top rope climbing endorsements)

- Day 1: PACI procedures for working at height – covers OHS requirements, legal liability for actions, admin requirements, planning & risk assessment for planned activities at height, review of exams.
- Day 2: Practical ‘how to’ setup & conduct abseiling activities & top rope climbing activities. Techniques on safeguarding participants while they undertake abseiling & top rope climbing.
- Day 3: Guiding ‘clients’ on top rope climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems
- Day 4: Guiding ‘clients’ on top rope climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems
- Day 5: Assessment

Typical training plan (for multipitch lead climbing endorsements)

Note: At this level, it is assumed that the leader/guide can also conduct abseiling & top rope climbing activities.

- Day 1: PACI procedures for working at height – covers OHS requirements, legal liability for actions, admin requirements, planning & risk assessment for planned activities at height, review of exams.
- Day 2: Practical ‘how to’ setup & conduct abseiling activities & top rope climbing activities. Techniques on safeguarding participants while they undertake abseiling & top rope climbing.
- Day 3: Guiding ‘clients’ on multipitch lead climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems
- Day 4: Guiding ‘clients’ on multipitch lead climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems
- Day 5: Guiding ‘clients’ on multipitch lead climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems
- Day 6: Further guiding practice then final assessment
- Day 7: Assessment (continued)

**Examples of activities which leaders/guides may choose to specialise in:**





## **Phase 4: Assessment**

Individuals who enrol in an assessment are expected to arrive fully prepared in terms of both their personal level of skill and their ability to guide others (to the standard required by industry).

The purpose of the assessment is to determine if candidates can perform to the level expected by industry and the nationally endorsed competency standards as defined by the SRO06 training package visit [www.ntis.gov.au](http://www.ntis.gov.au)).

The assessor *will not* give advice or otherwise intervene during the assessment activity *unless* a potentially dangerous situation develops. In other words, the assessor will only intervene to prevent injuries or accidents from occurring.

**The assessment is similar to sitting an exam at a university. At a university exam, you are not aloud to ask questions or seek the advice and assistance of others. The exam must be your own work.**

If a candidate feels that s/he is not yet ready to undertake assessment, s/he should seek further training and development from a competent instructor. Training should continue until such time as the candidate is ready to attempt an assessment.

The operative word through out the assessment is ‘SHOW ME’.

The assessor *will not* discriminate on the basis of gender, race, religion, political and/or business standing. If a candidate believes that s/he was discriminated against or unfairly assessed, action can be taken against that assessor. There are severe penalties for such discriminatory behaviour.

Once the assessment activities begin, the candidates *are not* permitted to seek advice or guidance from others. Questions specific to clarifying performance requirements may only be directed to the assessor – no one else.

The assessor may, on occasion, intervene during a session and stop the activity if the candidate is grossly deviating from industry standards or appears lost or confused (ie long periods of silence and signs of abnormal behaviour). The assessor may, in such circumstances, instruct the candidate to stop. Where time permits, the candidate will be given an opportunity to try again later and re-sit his/her assessment. However, other candidates may be next in line and will also want an opportunity to complete their assessment.

Candidates who are deliberately disruptive and/or violating accepted industry notions of safe practice will be asked to leave.

There are no refunds given in the event a candidate receives a result of ‘not yet competent’ (NYC).

Candidates should clarify their questions and concerns with their assessor BEFORE the assessment begins.