

Curriculum activity risk assessment

Rock Climbing and Abseiling

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Activity scope

This document relates to student participation in Rock Climbing or Abseiling as a curriculum activity.

Both activities may occur in natural or built environments and require the use of specialised equipment and ropes.

Rock climbing is the process of ascending natural cliffs. Associated activities include single pitch top rope climbing and abseiling, and multi pitch lead climbing and abseiling. If students are bouldering, refer to Low Ropes Group Activity Risk Assessment.

The safety requirements for rock climbing and abseiling also apply to all rock climbing walls and abseiling towers specifically constructed for this purpose, including those in gymnasiums.

It is highly recommended that the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards are referred to when planning this activity (see 'Important links' on last page).



Teachers/leaders:		
Activity description:		
Start date:	Finish date:	No of students (approx.):
Class groups:		Supervision ratio (approx.):

Risk level

The actual risk level will vary according to the specific circumstances of the activity and these **must** be considered when assessing the inherent risk level and planning the activity. As a starting point, ask the following questions:

- Which students will be involved?
- What will the students be doing?
- What will the students be using?
- Where will the students be?
- Who will be leading the activity?



Queensland Government

Uncontrolled copy. Refer to HLS-PR-012: Curriculum Activity Risk Management at <http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr012/> for master.

Date Modified: 13 August 2010

Climbing to the Top, File #: 1493273
iStockphoto © Joseph C. Justice Jr.

Risk level		Action required / approval
<input type="checkbox"/>	High	<p>Single Pitch Top Rope Climbing or abseiling An anchor is set up at the summit of a route prior to the start of a climb. Rope is run through the anchor. One end attaches to the climber and the other to the belayer, who keeps the rope taut during the climb and prevents long falls.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extreme	<p>Single or Multiple Pitch Lead Climbing or multi pitch abseiling One person, called the 'leader', will climb from the ground with a rope directly attached (and not through a top anchor) while the other, called the 'second', belays the leader. The leader ascends and places protection. At the top of a pitch, the leader sets up an anchor, and then belays the 'second' up to the anchor. Once both are at the anchor, the leader begins climbing the next pitch and so on until they reach the top. Once at the top, the group may abseil back down. Multi pitch abseiling may be a stand alone activity, not involving climbing.</p>

Listed below are the minimum recommendations for this type of activity. For any items checked "No", provide further information on the additional or alternate controls to be implemented for the safe conduct of the activity.

Minimum supervision
Adequate adult supervision is to be provided. In determining what is adequate, consider the number of students, their individual needs, and the nature of the activity. If an adult other than a registered teacher is engaged for instruction, a teacher should be present to take overall responsibility. Blue Card requirements must be adhered to.
<input type="checkbox"/> Registered teacher with minimum qualifications as outlined below OR <input type="checkbox"/> An adult with minimum qualifications as outlined below, in the presence of a registered teacher
<p>When planning any outdoor activity, the ratio of qualified, experienced leaders to dependent participants needs to be considered. In certain situations, judgement may dictate smaller or larger numbers of participants per leader. Several variables can affect this decision, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcomes of the risk management process • leaders' experience • participants' expected capabilities (i.e. experience, competence, fitness) • conditions (environment, weather) • distance and nature of terrain between each active rope • line of sight and sound for supervision • belay system and participant skill • planned duration of the activity • number of participants and optimum group size • remoteness of the activity • suitability and availability of equipment.
Further information:

Minimum Qualifications

The qualifications listed in this section are minimums for each type of situation. Leaders are encouraged to seek training to raise their qualification level above the minimum listed.

Current first aid qualifications including Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) or ready access to first aid facilities including qualified personnel.

OR

If operating more than one hour away from Emergency Services, current Remote Area First Aid

[Blue Card](#) requirements met

Demonstrated skills and currency that meet the leadership, group management, technical capacities and safety requirements (including familiarity of the environment, emergency procedures by all adult participants) of the specific circumstances being addressed

Rock climbing, artificial or natural surface, single pitch (not lead climbing)

For a registered teacher:

- a statement of attainment from a registered training organisation covering the following units of competence
- SROCLA001A / SROCLN001A Demonstrate simple climbing skills (natural or artificial, where appropriate)
 - SROCLA002A / SROCLN002A Apply climbing skills (natural or artificial, where appropriate)
 - SROCLA003A / SROCLN003A Establish Belays for climbing (natural or artificial, where appropriate)
 - SROCLA008A / SROCLN007A Guide climbing activities (natural or artificial, where appropriate)
 - SROVTR001A Perform vertical rescue

OR

Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation, with specialisations in appropriate activities.

OR

a Diploma of Outdoor Recreation, with specialisations in appropriate activities.

OR

a registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS), at the following levels; Restricted, single pitch Climbing Guide (Natural/ Artificial Surfaces)

OR

Australian Climbing Instructors Association (ACIA) or Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) Single Pitch Guide certification

For a leader other than a registered teacher:

A statement of attainment for a nationally recognised course or Skill Set, at the level of Climbing Guide, Artificial Surface (restricted) Top Rope or Climbing Guide, Natural Surface (restricted) Top Rope Single Pitch, from a Registered Training Organisation

OR

Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation or higher, with specialisations in climbing single pitch (Natural/Artificial Surfaces)

OR

a registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS), at the following levels; Restricted, single pitch Climbing Guide (Natural/ Artificial Surfaces)

OR

Australian Climbing Instructors Association (ACIA) or Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) Single Pitch Guide certification

Rock climbing, natural surface, multi pitch

For a registered teacher:

- A statement of attainment from a registered training organisation covering the following units of competence:
 - SROCLN001A Demonstrate simple climbing skills (natural surfaces)
 - SROCLN002A Apply climbing skills (natural surfaces)
 - SROCLN003A Establish Belays for climbing (natural surfaces)
 - SROCLN004A Apply lead climbing skills
 - SROCLN007A Guide climbing activities (natural surfaces)
 - SROVTR001A Perform vertical rescue
- OR**
- Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation or higher with specialisations in appropriate activities.
- OR**
- a registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS), at the following levels;
Multi pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces)
- OR**
- Australian Climbing Instructors Association (ACIA) or Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) Multi Pitch Guide certification

For a leader other than a registered teacher:

- A statement of attainment for a nationally recognised course or Skill Set, at the level of Climbing Guide, Natural Surfaces Multi Pitch, from a Registered Training Organisation
- OR**
- Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation or higher with specialisations in climbing natural surfaces, multi pitch.
- OR**
- a registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS), at the following levels;
Multi pitch Climbing Guide (Natural Surfaces)
- OR**
- Australian Climbing Instructors Association (ACIA) or Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) Multi Pitch Guide Certification

Abseiling, natural or artificial surface, single pitch

For a registered teacher:

- A statement of attainment from a registered training organisation covering the following units of competence:
 - SROABA001A Demonstrate simple abseiling skills on artificial surfaces
 - SROABA002A Apply single pitch abseiling skills on artificial surfaces
 - SROABA003A Establish ropes for abseiling on artificial surfaces
 - SROABA005A Guide abseiling on artificial surfaces (single pitch)
 - SROABN001A Demonstrate simple abseiling skills on natural surfaces
 - SROABN002A Safeguard an abseiler using a single rope belay system
 - SROABN003A Apply single pitch abseiling skills on natural surfaces
 - SROABN004A Establish ropes for single pitch abseiling on natural surfaces
 - SROABN007A Guide abseiling on natural surfaces (single pitch)
- OR**
- a registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS), at the following levels; single pitch Abseiling Guide (Natural or artificial Surfaces)
- OR**
- Australian Climbing Instructors Association (ACIA) or Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) Single Pitch Guide certification

For a leader other than a registered teacher:

- A statement of attainment or for a nationally recognised course or Skill Set, at the level of Abseiling Guide, Natural / Artificial Surface Single Pitch, from a Registered Training Organisation
OR
- Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation or higher with specialisations in Abseiling
OR
- a registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS), at the following level; Single pitch Abseiling Guide (Natural or artificial Surfaces)
OR
- Australian Climbing Instructors Association (ACIA) or Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) Single Pitch Guide certification

Abseiling, natural surface, multi pitch

For a registered teacher:

- A statement of attainment from a registered training organisation covering the following units of competence
 - SROABN005A Apply multi pitch abseiling skills (natural surfaces)
 - SROABN009A Guide abseiling activities (natural surfaces)
 - SROVTR002A Perform complex vertical rescues
 - SROABN006A Establish ropes for multi pitch abseiling on natural surfaces**OR**
- Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation or higher with specialisations in appropriate activities.
OR
- A registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS), at the following levels;
Multi pitch Abseiling Guide (Natural Surfaces)
OR
- Australian Climbing Instructors Association (ACIA) or Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) Multi Pitch Guide certification

For a leader other than a registered teacher:

- A statement of attainment or for a nationally recognised course or Skill Set, at the level of Abseiling Guide, Multi Pitch, from a Registered Training Organisation
OR
- Certificate III in Outdoor Recreation or higher with specialisations in appropriate activities.
OR
- A registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (NOLRS), at the following levels; Multi pitch Abseiling Guide (Natural Surfaces)
OR
- Australian Climbing Instructors Association (ACIA) or Professional Association of Climbing Instructors (PACI) Multi Pitch Abseiling Guide certification

Further information:

Minimum equipment/facilities <i>If 'No' is ticked, provide further information.</i>	Yes	No
First aid kit suitable for activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication system Electronic and other equipment that can be damaged by water is to be carried in water resistant containers. Leaders are responsible for determining the equipment to be carried by all participants. The following communication equipment should be carried as appropriate for the activity and area of operation:		
<input type="checkbox"/> phone-line at location	<input type="checkbox"/> mobile phone	
<input type="checkbox"/> PLB (personal locator beacon)	<input type="checkbox"/> UHF Radio	
Other:		
Sun safety equipment (hat, sunscreen, shirt etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate clothing and footwear, taking into account the requirements of the activity and weather conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment use and maintenance log to be kept for each session	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drinking water (students should not share drinking containers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Harness and helmet for all participants in line with the following standards and practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • harnesses and helmets specifically designed for rock climbing/abseiling, and compliant with International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation (UIAA), European Committee for Standardisation standard or equivalent; (Refer to UIAA safety standards page [see 'Important links' on last page] for more information.) • harnesses to be worn at all times during the activity, and to be connected by a safety line (rope or tape) to an appropriate anchor point or belay where exposure to a fall exists. • harnesses to be retired by manufacturer's nominated expiry date • helmets to be worn and secured throughout any activity session where students are exposed to typical climbing/abseiling hazards 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety ropes, harnesses, slings and all other safety equipment (karabiners, slings and chocks), manufactured specifically for rock climbing/abseiling, used according to the manufacturers' specifications and accepted abseiling practices and conforming to Australian Standards and UIAA specifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A suitably equipped rescue pack, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an additional safety rope, equivalent to the height of the highest element or belay wire or anchor point • knife • pair of pliers or multi grips • two-three steel karabiners • tape (for improvised chest harness) • 2-3 prussik loops • 2-3 alloy karabiners • belay device • pulley • safety harness connected by a safety line to an appropriate anchor point or belay. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vehicular access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further information:		

Governing bodies/associations	Yes	No
It is highly recommended that the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards are referred to when planning this activity (see 'Important links' on last page)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further information:		

Hazards and suggested control measures

All persons engaging in this activity should:

- identify the hazards, including any additional hazards not mentioned here
- assess their significance
- manage the potential risks.

Listed below are indicative hazards/risks and suggested control measures. They are by no means exhaustive lists. After checking these, add details of any other identified hazards/risks and additional controls you intend to implement.

Hazards/risks	Control measures	Yes	No	Implementation plan / Additional controls
Biological material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodily fluids (e.g. blood, sweat, saliva) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with HLS-PR-004: Infection Control and Management of Prescribed Contagious Conditions and Infection Control Guideline. Students with open cuts and abrasions are to be removed from the activity and treated immediately. If bleeding cannot be controlled completely, the participant should not be allowed to return to the activity. All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood should be treated as potentially infectious. • Ensure that personal items such as drink bottles are not shared. • Have sufficient and suitable containment material (bandages etc.) available. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess weather conditions before and during activity (e.g. temperature, storms). • Assess suitability of surrounds. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Hazards/risks	Control measures	Yes	No	Implementation plan / Additional controls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surfaces Surrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check surrounds for loose items, debris and hazards. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use, maintain and store equipment according to manufacturer's specifications. Conduct regular equipment checks prior to start of sessions. Particular attention should be given to fastening systems when removable rope systems are used. Ensure wet equipment is dried before storing. Provide instruction in safe rappelling methods and use of equipment. Supply all equipment in a clean and serviceable condition. Ensure that staff have the ability to recognise worn or faulty equipment. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falling from vertical surface 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have appropriate lead-up activities. Check equipment before use. Follow progressive and sequential skill development. Use, maintain and store equipment according to the manufacturer's specifications. Ensure all safety equipment is in place and in good condition. Use a belay system appropriate to the activity. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Physical exertion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strains and sprains Exhaustion and fatigue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have appropriate warm-up and warm-down activities Follow progressive and sequential skills development. Have ice packs available. Continuously monitor students for signs of fatigue and exhaustion. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain parental permission, including relevant medical information. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Submitted by:	Date:
List the names of those who were involved in the preparation of this risk assessment.	

Approval	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Approved as submitted:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Approved with the following condition(s):
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not approved for the following reason(s):
By:	Designation:
Signed:	Date:
Once approved, activity details should be entered into the <i>School Curriculum Activity Register</i> by administrative staff.	Reference no.

Monitor and review <i>To be completed during and/or after the activity and/or at the completion of the series of activities.</i>	Yes	No
Are the control measures still effective?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have there been any changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are further actions required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details:		

Important links

- HLS-PR-003: First Aid
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr003/>
- HLS-PR-004: Infection Control and Management of Prescribed Contagious Conditions
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr004/>
- HLS-PR-005: Health and Safety Incident Recording and Notification
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr005/>
- SCM-PR-002: School Excursions
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/schools/scmpr002/>
- HRM-PR-010: Working with Children Check – Blue Cards
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/hr/hrmpr010/>
- HLS-PR-013: Developing a Sun Safety Strategy
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr013/>
- Infection Control Guideline
http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/infection_control_guideline.pdf
- International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation
http://www.theuiaa.org/safety_standards.php
- National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme
<http://www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au/>
- Queensland Adventure Activity Standards
http://www.qorf.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=1048

Glossary and important information

CARABINER: A **carabiner** or **karabiner** (colloquially: *crab*, *snap-link*, *krab*, or *biner*) is a metal loop with a sprung or screwed gate. The loop part opposite the gate is referred to as the spine. It can quickly and reversibly connect components in safety-critical systems.

PRUSIK LOOP: A **Prusik** is a friction hitch or knot used to put a loop of cord around a rope. This is applied in climbing, canyoneering, mountaineering, caving, rope rescue, and by arborists.

BELAYING: **Belaying** refers to a variety of techniques used in climbing to exert friction on a climbing rope so that a falling climber does not fall very far.

Further information

For further information on incorporating risk management strategies into curriculum activity planning refer to [HLS-PR-012 Managing Risks in Curriculum Activities](#) and the associated list of [Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment Guidelines](#). (See: <http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr012/index1.html>)

For further support with risk management training and advice, contact trained staff in schools such as Workplace Health and Safety Officers (WHSOs) and Workplace Health and Safety Representatives (WHSRs), and regional staff such as Senior Health and Safety Consultants.

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