



Mountaineering Club

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

**2020-21**

**University of Sheffield Union of Students**

**Mountaineering Club Good Practice Guidelines 2020-2021**

The “Union” refers to the University of Sheffield Union of Students.

The “Club” refers to the University of Sheffield Mountaineering Club, which is part of the Union.

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6. **Introduction**
	1. Being totally committed to the safety of its members, the Club considers it good practice to operate in accordance with the following guidelines. The Club Committee in conjunction with the Clubs Safety Adviser has produced these.
	2. All Club activities will be undertaken within these guidelines in order to ensure the safety of participating members and protect the Club from liability. Failure to apply these guidelines may result in the University/Union support being withdrawn from the Club.
7. **University/Union Activities**
	1. All Club activities are recognised as University/Union activities.
	2. University/Union Activities are recognised as being those which:
* are publicised as ‘official’ Club activities;
* and/or are publicised at a Club Annual General Meeting or General Meeting;
* and/or are publicised on ‘official’ Club social networks and notice boards;
* and/or are funded by the University/Union.
	1. Organisers and participants of University/Union Activities are bound by the conditions of the Club’s Constitution.
	2. Events and activities publicised/arranged on the Club’s ‘official’ social networks are automatically deemed to be a Club Activity, unless otherwise specified. The Club’s ‘official’ social networks are listed as:
* The University of Sheffield Mountaineering Club website (www.sheffieldmountaineering.co.uk)
* The University of Sheffield Mountaineering Club Facebook page (www.facebook.com/UoSMountaineering)
	1. No other online pages or social networks are endorsed or supported by the Club, regardless of any affiliations by name, logo or members, and the Club cannot be held liable for any content or consequence of unspecified social networks or organisations.
1. **Trip Organisers & Trip Activity Registration**
	1. As a Sport Sheffield Club, it is the responsibility of the Club committee to ensure that **trip and/or activity registration** is followed as laid down in Section 8 of the Union Safety Handbook, “Trip and Activity Registration” for ‘High Risk’ Clubs. This includes registering trip activities with the Club Sports Manager (CSM) and the Safety Adviser (SA) where necessary and using the self-regulation system.
	2. **Trip Organisers** are responsible for the overall planning of a ‘trip’ away. Trip Organisers will take the role of ‘Activity Leader’ for the whole trip. Although they may delegate tasks, it is their responsibility to ensure that all requirements are fulfilled. Trip organisers will typically be either a member/members of the executive committee, or a member/members of the Club appointed as trip organiser by the executive committee.
	3. A **Trip Notification Form** **(TNF)** is required by the University for any trip operating away from the clubs home/normal base, or any trip that involves an overnight stay. The Club’s home base is the defined as Sheffield and the Peak District.
	4. Copies of the **TNF** need to be emailed to the Clubs Sports Manager and the Clubs Safety Adviser. For trips in the UK preliminary TNFs need to arrive by the Tuesday afternoon, and finalised ones by the Thursday afternoon, prior to the weekend of the activity. Last minute changes of personnel and their \*UCard/registration\* numbers, beyond the Thursday deadline, will need to be emailed directly to University Security Services at security@shef.ac.uk or telephoned through to Campus Control on 0114 222 4085.
	5. All participants on club trips and activities should have completed a **Personal Details Form** upon joining the Club. Forms for all Club members will be kept in the Club file in \*the Source\* where they are easily accessible for Trip Leaders. Participants not currently affiliated with the University must supply next of kin details to the Trip Organisers for use as an emergency contact.
	6. **Trip Organisers** are responsible for overseeing a system on trips whereby written information is left at base as to the activity and approximate whereabouts of each trip participant and their emergency contact number.
2. **Activity Coordinators**
	1. **Climbing/Walking/Running Coordinators** are committee members responsible for ensuring that participants are allocated the most appropriate designation for their respective activity (Climbing/Walking/Running), according to the participant’s level of experience.
	2. On weekends away, it is the responsibility of the Activity Coordinator to ensure participants are divided into groups according to competence. The designations for Climbing, outlined in Sections 6.4.7 and 6.4.8 will form the basis of group selection.
	3. If the Activity Coordinator is not on the weekend away, a suitable Club member must be appointed to carry out the responsibilities of the Activity Coordinator. The Activity Coordinator must be completely satisfied that the appointed Club member is capable of safely fulfilling these responsibilities. The Club member should be briefed fully on what they are expected to do while on the weekend away.
3. **Activity Leaders and Trip Organisers**
	1. The attendance of at least one discipline-appropriate Activity Leader is a requirement of any Club Activity and it is the responsibility of the Trip Organiser to ensure this happens. If participants are considered capable of assessing the risks of an activity for themselves then they may be permitted by the Trip Organiser to continue as “equals” without the need for a designated “leader” e.g. multi-pitch climbing, scrambling above Grade 1 or winter mountaineering.
	2. **Activity Leaders** are chosen by committee members in conjunction with the advice from other club members, are then signed off by the relevant Activity Coordinator and one other member of committee. They are chosen on both their ability to manage/be responsible for a group of people, the extent and nature of their experience of the activity, and technical ability to lead leading said activity.
	3. All Activity Leaders and equals must submit an up-to-date **Activity Leader Form (ALF)** to the Trip Organiser prior to the activity and/or trip. This will ensure that Trip Organisers and Activity leaders have access to accurate information required to make appropriate decisions as to participants’ skill and experience suitability for various trips and activities.
	4. All Walks Leaders must hold at least a 16-hour or equivalent **First Aid** qualification. In exceptional circumstances, other First Aiders may be appointed to perform First Aid on behalf of the Activity Leader. A suitable First Aid kit (such as those available from the Union) should be carried at all times by the Activity Leader or equal on Club Activities.
	5. Activity Leaders are required to:
* be sensible of the relevant skills, technical abilities and experience of all participants;
* keep the safety and wellbeing of participants in mind at all times, and act accordingly;
* ensure that the Club Good Practice Guidelines are followed at all times and that they do not bring the Club into disrepute;
* provide the highest standard of leadership as is reasonable in all circumstances;
* ensure that the necessary equipment, including any emergency or First Aid kit, is carried within the during an activity. Activity Leaders should be competent in the use of such equipment;
* register the activity in the appropriate manner (see section 3);
* report any near miss occurrences following the procedure laid down in Section 9 of the Union Safety Handbook, “Incident, Accident and Emergency Procedures”.
	1. For **Walking and Running** it is recommended that a *maximum* **leader to participant ratio** of 1:12 be used. However a lower ratio will provide a better quality of leadership and is more environmentally friendly, and is therefore recommended where possible.

For **Climbing** maximum leader to participant ratios are detailed in Section 6.4.

For **Scrambling** it is recommended that a maximum leader to participant ratio of 1:6 be applied for leadership and supervision.

Groups of fewer than four should not venture out on a Club activity, unless they are activity equals with the skills, capability and experience to take responsibility for their own actions. No one should venture out alone on club activities.

* 1. If, in an extraordinary event or the event of an emergency, it becomes necessary to split a group, the Activity Leader(s) must be completely satisfied that any additional leaders who are appointed are capable of safely fulfilling the responsibilities of an Activity Leader (as outlined in Section 5 of the Club’s Good Practice Guidelines).
	2. Activity Leaders must be aware that although participants are accepting a certain amount of risk themselves, many lack the necessary experience to undertake reliable risk assessment, and therefore partly rely on the Activity Leaders’ judgement. It should also be remembered that participants are often in a new environment and Activity Leaders cannot expect that apparently obvious precautions will always be taken. Activity Leaders have a “Duty of Care” to participants that they must fulfil (see Section 10).
1. **Activity Leadership, Supervision and Instruction**
	1. Activity Leaders should refuse an individual participation in an activity if the Activity Leader is not confident that they have the necessary equipment, experience or stamina. If necessary, the Activity Coordinator or Trip Organiser should make that decision. However, it is the responsibility of the Activity Leader to identify any such unsuitable participants and bring them to the notice of the Activity Coordinator/Trip Organiser.
	2. During the planning of the activity and throughout its duration, the Activity Leaders should understand and follow the following NGB guidelines:
* The Activity Leader is responsible for collecting and returning any and all Club equipment that has been borrowed.
* Upon the return of the activity the Activity Leader should report to the home phone contact or Trip Organiser to inform them of a safe return.
	1. **Walking and Scrambling**
		1. **Walking and Running Activity Leaders** shall have undergone Club navigation training (as organised by the **Walking/Running Coordinator**) or other appropriate training and be signed off at the discretion of the **Walking/Running Coordinator**.
		2. **Scramble Leaders** may lead scrambles to Grade 1 only (as specified in an authoritative guidebook). Any scrambles beyond this grade are only to be attempted by a group of equals (with a minimum of two members) with the consent of the Trip Organiser.
		3. The wearing of helmets on scrambles by all participants is strongly advised, particularly on gully scrambles where loose or falling rock is likely. However, this is left to the discretion of the Scramble Leader, who reserves the right to bar from the activity any participant who refuses to wear a helmet when the Scramble Leader deems it necessary.
	2. **Rock Climbing**
		1. NGB guidelines should be followed where possible at Club climbing events.
		2. Participants must agree to abide by the terms and conditions of any and all climbing centres at which the Club may be operating.
		3. All climbers must wear helmets on Club Activities. The Activity Leader must specify this to participants that are new to the club.
		4. Climbing and abseiling within the Club will be taught in line with NGB guidelines.
		5. Non-SPA assessed participants may become a Climbing Activity Leader if they demonstrate appropriate levels of awareness, experience and technical competence, at the discretion of the **Climbing Coordinator**. However, this qualification is not valid outside of the Club and members are advised to complete SPA training.
		6. Sufficiently experienced Climbing Activity Leaders, designated by the **Climbing Coordinator**, may supervise novices during their first leads (Appendix 1).
		7. **Single Pitch Climbing:**
* **Single Pitch Seconds:** All members wishing to become a **Second** must undergo a brief assessment. This assessment requires an experienced Club climber to check the competency of the member whilst the member belays and seconds a lead climber, demonstrating safe practice. Further training may be required at this stage to consolidate these skills. Single pitch climbing may only be conducted under the direct supervision of at least a **Single Pitch Leader**.
* **Single Pitch Equals:** All members wishing to become an **Equal** must undergo a brief assessment. The assessment will require an experienced Club climber to check the member when leading, placing adequate leader protection, and then building a belay and belaying a second up appropriately. Further training may be required at this stage to consolidate these new skills. Single pitch climbing may be conducted in groups of **Equals**.
* **Single Pitch Leaders:** All members wishing to become a **Leader** must undergo a brief assessment. Only **Equals** may become **Leaders**. The assessment will require an experienced Club climber to check the member is competent and confident supervising less experienced climbers up to a ratio of 1:2, providing one of the supervised climbers is a **Second**. The leader may supervise at larger ratios in exceptional circumstances; for example when top roping[[1]](#footnote-1), the **Leader** can belay novices and throw the rope back down for others to climb the route.
* **Single Pitch Group Leaders:** All members wishing to become a **Group Leader** must undergo an in depth assessment. The assessment will require the **Climbing Coordinator** to check the member is suitably experienced, competent and confident supervising less experienced climbers up to a ratio of 1:9. The assessment will be brief if the member is SPA trained or qualified, or holds a similar qualification.
	+ 1. **Multi Pitch Climbing:**
* **Multi Pitch Seconds:** All members wishing to become a **Second** must undergo a brief assessment. This assessment requires an experienced Club climber to check the competency of the member whilst the member belays and seconds a lead climber, demonstrating safe practice. Further training may be required at this stage to consolidate these new skills. Multi pitch climbing may only be conducted under the direct supervision of at least a **Multi Pitch Leader** – only the **Leader** may lead pitches.
* **Multi Pitch Equals:** All members wishing to become an **Equal** must undergo a brief assessment. The assessment will require an experienced Club climber to check the member when leading multi pitch routes, placing adequate leader protection, and then building a belay and belaying a second up appropriately. Further training may be required at this stage to consolidate these new skills. Multi pitch climbing may be conducted in groups of **Equals**.
* **Multi Pitch Leaders:** All members wishing to become a **Leader** must undergo a brief assessment. Only **Equals** may become **Leaders**. The assessment will require an experienced Club climber to check the member is competent and confident supervising less experienced climbers up to a ratio of 1:2, providing one of the supervised climbers is a **Second**. The **Leader** must also be able to demonstrate competence in the following skills:
	+ Reduce fall factors to protect the belayer from serious forces in the event of a multi pitch leader fall;
	+ Build isolated belays, where possible, where the leader can unclip from to lead;
	+ Lock off a belay plate under load;
	+ Abseil using an Italian hitch;
	+ Tie and use a Prusik appropriately to protect an abseil;
	+ Prusik up and down a rope (Prusik self-rescue);
	+ Rig a safe retrievable abseil.
		1. **Sea Cliff Climbing**
			- **Sea Cliff Equals:** Sea cliffs, in this context, are
			 defined as any sea cliff which requires an abseil approach
			without an easy walk off route from the base and/ or is tidally affected.
			 Club members wanting to climb on these cliffs as part of a club
			activity must fulfill the criteria specified here and be signed off as
			suitable by both Climbing Co-ordinators. Club members,
			without Sea Cliff Equal status, are not able to climb on sea
			cliffs as part of a club activity even under the supervision of a Multi
			Pitch Leader.
			- Only members who are already designated as Multi Pitch
			Leaders will be considered as candidates to become Sea Cliff
			Equals. The additional criteria required is logged experience
			of a minimum of 10 good quality named lead routes on qualifying sea
			cliffs on their Activity Leader Form. This experience will, as a
			consequence, have been gained outside of Sheffield University Mountaineering
			Club's Activities.
			- Based on this evidence, and personal knowledge of
			candidates abilities, the Club Climbing Co-ordinators can then sign
			these climbers off as Sea Cliff Equals.
		2. The appointment of each of the above designations must be confirmed by the **Climbing Coordinator** and recorded on the member’s Activity Experience Form.
		3. All of the above designations are at the discretion of the **Climbing Coordinator**, in agreement with the climber in question. Recommendations by other Club members will be considered.
		4. All of the above designations are subject to weather conditions, crag and individual’s competency.
		5. The above assessments confirm only that the member was considered a safe and capable leader and belay at the time of assessment.
		6. Activity Leader Forms count towards a member’s case for appointment to the next designation.
		7. Activity Leader Forms should detail all relevant climbs led and seconded, which will count towards the minimum required number of routes climbed. The following outline the minimum requirements:
	+ **Seconds:** Minimum of 3 outdoor routes logged as a second for both Single and Multi Pitch.
	+ **Equals:** Minimum of 5 good quality outdoor routes logged on lead for both Single and Multi Pitch. Leader protection checked by an experienced Club climber or the **Climbing Coordinator**.
	+ **Leaders:** Minimum of 10 good quality outdoor routes logged on lead for both Single and Multi Pitch. Leader protection checked by an experienced Club climber or the **Climbing Coordinator**. At the discretion of the climber and judgement of the **Climbing Coordinator** and **Chair** feeling confident to be responsible for novices.
	+ **Group Leaders:** Minimum of 40 good quality outdoor routes logged on lead for Single Pitch only.
	+ **Sea Cliff Equals:** Minimum of 10 good quality sea cliff (as defined above) routes logged on lead.
		1. Occasional practical training sessions will be run throughout the year by a suitably experienced club climber or an MIA/MIC to develop these skills as and when required by potential **Leaders**.
	1. **Winter Mountaineering**
		1. Helmets should be worn for winter mountaineering when appropriate. Participants are strongly advised to wear helmets at all times.
		2. If walks that are planned as ‘summer’ routes are considered to require the use of crampons and/or a walking axe by a Trip Organiser or the Walks Coordinator, it should be ensured that all participants have adequate experience/training in their use, and well as other techniques required by the conditions that may need to be employed. More caution will need to be shown and the route may need to be altered depending on weather conditions and reports.
		3. On walks, mountain days and climbs requiring winter skills and equipment, the **Winter Grading Guidelines** should be followed and the Trip Organiser/Activity Coordinator should be satisfied with participants suitability for the activity.
		4. All participants in winter mountaineering (either walking or attempting a graded route) need to have completed a recognised training course such as those run by the Club or equivalent (e.g. Conville courses), or have other appropriate logged experience. Each winter participant will be graded according to the Winter Grading Guidelines in consultation with the ‘High Risk’ Clubs’ Safety Adviser (Appendix 1). It is vital that the participant, on their Activity Leader Form, record this training, grading and any experience in full detail.
1. **Club Equipment**
	1. The Club provides climbing equipment for its members. Leaders and Coordinators of Club climbing activities should ensure that beginners climbing with the Club wear helmets. Use of Club equipment will be denied if the participant refuses to wear a helmet.
	2. An inventory is to be kept of all Club equipment. New purchases are to be logged on the inventory immediately.
	3. All equipment is to be stored in a suitable way i.e. away from acids/alkalis in line with NGB guidelines.
	4. The Climbing Coordinator and Equipment officer are responsible for formally checking the climbing ‘software’ once per year. A record of this check is to be kept in the Club files in the Source. They will also keep an up-to-date log of the use of Club equipment, especially rope use.
	5. The Equipment Officer is responsible for ensuring that all Club equipment is in good working order and safe to use on club activities. Any unsafe equipment should be repaired or retired from service.
	6. Equipment should be disposed of by the Equipment Officer of when:
* It has suffered from excessive wear and tear as recommended under NGB or supplier/manufacturer guidelines
* It has reached the end of its lifespan as recommended under NGB or supplier/manufacturer guidelines
	1. Members using Club equipment should be aware of the safety checks they personally need to make on it and should realise that they use Club equipment entirely at their own risk.
	2. Members should be aware that Club climbing equipment (i.e. harnesses and helmets) are for temporary hire only, and must be turned to the kit store after each use. Where it can reasonably be expected, members are advised to purchase their own equipment after a suitable trial period of the activity.
	3. Participants should ensure that they have suitable equipment and clothing for respective activities, as recommended by NGB guidelines. If unsure, they should ask an Activity Leader for advice.
1. **Club Administration**
	1. The Club is obliged to operate within the Club constitution to receive any Sport Sheffield/Union support. This constitution will be prepared by the Club and approved by the Sports Committee.
	2. The Club is obliged to produce/complete any paperwork that is required by Sport Sheffield/the Union failing which Union support could be withdrawn.
	3. The Club file in The Source will contain an updated telephone contact list for club officials, as well as an updated membership list.
	4. The executive committee is obliged to make available to Sport Sheffield, the Union and Club members the Club Constitution, the Good Practice Guidelines and the minutes from all General and Annual General meetings.
2. **Accident and Emergency Procedures**
	1. In the unlikely event of an accident or emergency, it is expected that the Activity Leaders/Coordinators/Trip Organisers will have the necessary experience and knowledge to take control of the situation and make decisions according to NGB and/or police guidelines.
	2. In the event of death or serious injury, the following procedure must be adopted concerning the disclosure of information.
* Liaise with the emergency services as required. Let them have the full names of any casualties and their personal details.
* Do not discuss any aspect of the incident with anyone who is not connected to the emergency services.
* Contact the University Security Services on 0114 222 4085 at any time. The University Director of Public Relations will then advise you on any further actions.
* The University will require the names of any casualties and their UCard/registration numbers in order to access their records. A telephone number where the University can contact you will also be necessary.
* Inform the Club’s Safety Adviser & Club’s Sports Manager as soon as practicable.
	1. Any accident/incident requiring a rescue or medical treatment by the emergency services is to be reported to the Club’s Safety Adviser within 12 hours.
1. **Club Guidance Notes on Liability – Duty of Care**
	1. Participants in any activity should be aware that they are responsible for their own actions and decisions, and that they have a duty of care towards others, especially if they choose to disregard the advice of the Activity Leader(s)/Coordinators or the Trip Organisers.
	2. Individuals in any sport face risk of injury as part of the normal participation in that sport. However, if a person has been injured because of another person’s negligence, and that negligence can be proved, they may seek financial compensation under civil law.
	3. To establish that there has been negligence:

• A duty of care must be owed.

• There must be a breach of that duty of care.

• Actual damage must have resulted from that breach of duty of care.

*‘In law, a Duty of Care is owed to persons who are so closely and directly affected by an individual’s acts that the individual ought reasonably to have had these people in contemplation as being affected, when directing his or her mind to the acts or omissions that are called into question.’*

* 1. When considering the nature of a particular duty of care, the following factors ought to be considered:

• The experience and expertise, or any other relevant characteristics of the persons concerned, e.g. greater care would be expected when dealing with a beginner than with an expert;

• The dangers of the particular activity;

• The risks of the injury occurring;

• The foreseability of the particular accident occurring;

• The suitability of the equipment or premises.

**Appendices**

1. **Abbreviations Used in Text**
	1. **Activity Leaders**

**WAL** – Walking Activity Leader

**CAL** – Climbing Activity Leader

* 1. **Climbing**

**SPS** – Single Pitch Second

**SPE** – Single Pitch Equal

**SPL** – Single Pitch Leader

**SPGL** – Single Pitch Group Leader

**MPS** – Multi Pitch Second

**MPE** – Multi Pitch Equal

**MPL** – Multi Pitch Leader

**SCE -** Sea Cliff Equal

* 1. **Governing Body Award Courses**

**SPA(T)** – Single Pitch Award Training (2 days)

**SPA** – Single Pitch Award (2 days)

**WGL(T)** – Walking Group Leader Training (3 days)

**WGL** – Walking Group Leader Assessment (3 days)

**ML(T)** – Mountain Leader Training Course (6 days)

**ML –** Mountain Leader Assessment Course (5 days)

1. **Activity Leaders: General Requirements**
	1. **Choosing Leaders**
		1. Activity Leaders within the club are chosen and signed off by two committee members. They will consult with other club members as appropriate. The choice of a person as an Activity Leader is dependent on the following:
		2. Suitable previous experience in the activity as logged on their current Activity Leader (AL) Form. This form to be lodged in the Club’s Safety File. The previous two years activity experience must be logged in detail on this AL Form. It may also include any past leadership experience they may have. Qualifications are not a pre-requisite for becoming a leader within the club but need to be logged on the form if relevant.
		3. A suitable level of maturity that will encompass:

###### An understanding of some the typical behaviours that less experienced people may exhibit during the activity;

###### The common sense/ competence to handle a group;

###### An understanding of the abilities and experience of the group that they are leading;

###### An ability to dynamically risk assess the various situations that are part of the activity;

###### A technical expertise well above the level required for the group activity they are engaged in;

###### A suitable appreciation and respect for other mountain/crag users;

###### The ability to plan a route/climb for various groups depending on their fitness/expertise/expectations. This may require taking note of escape routes, length, severity, time available, weather, etc.

* 1. **Leaders General Responsibilities & Required Knowledge - Check List:**

**Activity Leaders will:**

###### Ensure that they have the names, mobile and registration numbers of everyone on the activity;

###### Demonstrate an awareness of their duty of care responsibility;

###### Brief individuals and the group appropriately;

###### Be able to identify and react to the needs of the group in relation to involvement, interest, enjoyment and achievement;

###### Demonstrate the safe and responsible management of all group members;

###### Have an understanding of the impact of weather and be prepared to change plans with conditions;

###### Manage time appropriately in relation to the plan, activity and conditions;

###### Be able to assesses the suitability of group members kit;

###### Understand the needs of those with disabilities and medical conditions;

###### Have a good understanding of, and have signed up to, the club’s GPGs and RAs;

###### Know how to call for expert help in the case of an accident or injury;

###### Understand the club procedure in dealing with an accident. These include:

* Having a contact at home base who will deal with the university while you deal with the situation. University Security Services telephone number – 0114 222 4085;
* Talking to the Club’s Safety Adviser & Club Sports Manager within 24 hours once the situation has been dealt with if the above not possible the leader would need to;
* **Not talking** to the press or allowing anyone in your group to do so.
	1. **First Aid**
		1. To ensure the safety of the group at least one participant, preferably the Activity Leader, should have a valid 16hr 1st Aid certificate with the ability to administer first aid as appropriate
		2. At least one suitable first aid kit to be carried within each group. Possible injuries on activities are cuts, head injuries and broken bones and thus the knowledge of how to deal with these are important skills to have within the group
	2. **Access & Environmental Knowledge**

**Activity leaders must:**

###### Have an awareness of the group’s responsibilities to the general public, environmental agencies, local residents and landowners;

###### Have an understanding of and the willingness to comply with the countryside code;

###### Operate in such a way as to minimise impact on the environment;

###### Have an awareness of local conservation sites and their sensitivities (e.g. AONBs and SSSI) and the knowledge of where to get further information;

###### Have some understanding of the CRoW (Countryside Rights of Way) Act and the Land Reform Act in Scotland;

###### Have an awareness of different land uses/users and a respect for them;

###### Know how to obtain a suitable weather forecast;

###### Have a basic understanding of weather systems and the effects they can have on their activity environment e.g. flooding, lightning, etc.;

###### Ensure your group has a basic understanding of the importance of the above.

1. **Walking Activity Leaders (WALs)**
	1. **Club Navigation Training**

WALs must have completed Club Navigation Training unless exempted because of previous experience Club Navigation Training to be organised by the Walking Coordinator.

As a result of this training WALs will understand and be able to use the following navigation skills and tools described below. These skills are similar to those included on ML or WGL Courses:

###### Be able to orientate a map;

###### Know the reliability of different features used on maps;

###### Use handrail features;

###### Use tick off features;

###### Use catching features;

###### Use attack points;

###### Aim off when appropriate;

###### Use aspect of slope when appropriate;

###### Understand contours and their use in navigation;

###### Navigate in poor visibility;

###### Take and use a 6 figure grid reference;

###### Use a compass to check general direction;

###### Understand magnetic deviation;

###### Use a compass to take and follow magnetic bearings;

###### Be able to use different scales and types of maps;

###### Be able to apply Naismith’s rule;

###### Be able to pace distances accurately when required.

* 1. **WALs/Group**

All walks to have a minimum of 2 WALs. This is in case an incidence occurs that requires the group to split. N.B. a WAL is NOT a suitable leader for winter conditions in Scotland.

1. **Climbing Activity Leaders (CALs)**

The skills and knowledge presented below are those that CALs should have. The lists can be used as check lists to train and assess those aspiring to be CALs. These skills are similar to those contained in SPA courses.

###### Planning

###### CALs should be able to plan sessions where there are a range of grades so that everyone can get involved at their level.

###### Equipment

###### The Club’s equipment should be used in Club top roping sessions. Your own equipment, gear and ropes, should not be used to set up anchors on group sessions. The reason is that all of Club equipment use is logged and its condition checked regularly.

###### CALs should be able to:

###### Evaluate the condition of equipment they use and pass this knowledge onto less experienced climbers;

* Use climbing wall equipment appropriately.
	1. **Anchors & Runners**

**CALs should:**

* Be able to place & recognise bomb proof runners;
* Know how to protect themselves when building belays at the top of the crag;
* Be able to construct reproducible bombproof belays after having led routes or for top roping & bottom roping sessions;
* Know why these anchors need to be independent & equally loaded;
* Know why the angles between independent belays are important;
* Know the strength they’re attempting to build a belay to;
* Understand fall factors and where to put runners;
* Be able to pass the above knowledge & skill along to aspirant leaders;
* Be able to place suitable leader protection for themselves, for their seconds and for novice leaders.
	1. **Fitting Equipment & Belaying**

**CALs should be able to:**

* Demonstrate safe fitting of helmets & harnesses;
* Teach appropriate knots;
* Connect self and others safely to the rope using the appropriate knots;
* Demonstrate and teach the best place to stand whilst belaying a leader;
* Demonstrate, teach and supervise the safe use of a belay plate;
* Teach appropriate & commonly used climbing calls;
* Recognise what makes a good route for less experienced climbers;
* Hold falls & carry out lowers;
* Lock off belay plates under load;
* Release belay plates safely under load;
* Use an Italian Hitch.
	1. **Abseiling, Bouldering & Coaching**

**CALs should be able to:**

* Construct a non-retrievable abseil to remove stuck runners;
* Use a Prusik protection system whilst abseiling & teach this safely;
* Use rope wraps around upper thigh when both hands are needed whilst abseiling to recover stuck runners & be able to teach this;
* Run bouldering sessions safely & appropriately;
* Provide coaching on climbing movement & techniques.
	1. **Access/Etiquette Issues**

**CALs should be able to:**

###### Use access/conservation information given in guidebooks/ other sources of information e.g. UK Climbing, BMC, etc.;

###### Obtain and act on information concerning local crag issues and agreements, e.g. bird nesting bans;

* Operate a flexible programme of activities so as to accommodate other site users.
1. **Winter Mountaineering**

All participants on winter mountaineering/climbing weekends should have completed a recognised training course. These will either have been run by the club, be of a similar level e.g. Conville courses or the participant will have submitted an appropriate experience form logging their summer/winter experience.

Each winter participant will be graded as to the activity they can participate in by consultation with the ‘High Risk’ Clubs’ Safety Adviser using the **Winter Grading Guidelines. These are listed below.**

Trip Organisers and the Walking/Climbing Coordinators will need to be confident that all group participants are suitable for all aspects of their winter day, including, personal equipment, safety equipment, fitness and navigational ability.

* 1. **General**

All those going on the Scottish trips as equals will need to sign up to clubs GPGs and RAs as equals

* 1. **Winter Grading Guidelines**

The following system of designation was developed during 2002-4 to assist the club in running safe winter trips to Scotland.

Those going to Scotland submit Personal Experience Forms, well in advance of the Scottish weekends, to the ‘High Risk’ Clubs’ Safety Adviser for assessment. They will then be graded accordingly. The key below explains the designation shorthand. The recommendations that follow the key ensure that all groups going out on the hill have a reasonable pool of experience, a first aider and appropriate numbers.

Note that Personal Experience Forms submitted will need to be relatively detailed, especially with regard to Scottish winter walking/climbing experience, as these are the only guide for each individuals designation.

* 1. **WINTER GRADING - Designation Key**

**General**

1. Has completed a recognised winter skills training course, Club/Winter Conville***,*** or has sufficient personal winter logged experience **(\*)**.

(\*) Allows that person to accompany other less experienced people on winter walks because has formal leadership experience with club/elsewhere already**.**

**Mountaineering**

## (AM) – Averagely experienced Scottish winter mountaineer*. (Approx. 6 quality winter days over 2 years).* May be very experiencedin summer mountaineering/scrambling navigation & high altitude snow but limited experience in Scottish winters.

**(EM)** – **Experienced Scottish winter mountaineer**.*(Approx. 14 quality Scottish winter walking days spread over 3 years).*

**Climbing**

**(AC**) – **Average experience of Scottish winter climbing.** *(Approx. 5 Scottish routes led as a minimum with rope experience via multi pitch rock climbing & some navigation experience).*

**(EC)** – **Experienced Scottish winter climber**. *(Approx. 14 logged Scottish climb led over 2 years with multi pitch rock climbing & navigation skills).*

 **(ECN**) – **Experienced Scottish winter climber with navigation skills.** *(Approx. 14 logged Scottish climbs led over 2 years, minimum of 4 in remoter areas. Also multi pitch rock climbing & navigation skills).*

 **Mountaineering & Climbing**

**(EMC) – Experienced winter mountaineer & climber.**

* 1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

###### General

All those going on the Scottish trips as equals to sign up to clubs GPGs and RAs as equals.

###### Winter Walking/Mountaineering

1. Groups to have a minimum of one (S) within group;
2. All groups to have someone with (\*);
3. All groups to have person minimally designated as (AM);
4. ***3 people minimum/4 people maximum*** on same winter walking/mountaineering trip except under circumstances described in summary.

**Summary** – Groups of 3 or 4 require people having the following designations in them: (AM), (S) & (\*). If an additional person has an (AM, S, \*) the total party size can be increased to 8.

###### Winter Climbing

1. (ECN, S) may lead rope of 2 novices in remote areas, e.g. Ben Nevis or Loch Avon Crags Novices may lead on certain pitches as chosen by ECN;
2. (EC, S) may lead 2 novices on non-remote crags, e.g. Northern Corries, Glencoe. Novices may lead on certain pitches as chosen by EC;
3. (AC, S) may lead rope of 1 novice on non-remote crags;
4. (EC, S) may climb in remote areas if they have an (AM) as part of the climbing team.

***These recommendations are suggested as a minimum requirement. Circumstances such as the weather, the difficulty of the mountaineering route/climbing route chosen etc. will all need to be factored in prior to taking a final decision on the morning or the evening before.***

1. Top roping here refers to belaying from the top of a route. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)