

Rock Leader



Photo: Outward Bound

Scope and Syllabus

With the support of:



NZOIA™ Rock Leader

Scope

Rock Leader Profile

The NZOIA Rock Leader can:

- Plan and prepare introductory rock climbing experiences
- Instruct groups in the rock climbing skills required for a positive introductory experience
- Lead and manage groups for an introductory rock climbing session
- Demonstrate effective safety management
- Obtain weather forecasts and apply weather interpretation skills
- Provide interpretive information about natural and cultural history and about flora and fauna
- Role model and promote accepted environmental practices

The NZOIA Rock Leader can work independently without direct supervision. Leaders are qualified to operate within an activity specific risk management plan. The qualification does not define the skill set required to write or approve such a plan.

This is a foundation qualification and provides a stepping stone towards NZOIA Rock and Sport Climbing qualifications.

Scope

The NZOIA Rock Leader can organise bouldering where the landing zone is flat and hazard free and the climber's feet do not exceed a height of 1.6 metres off the ground.

Can set up single pitch top rope climbs where:

- Haul lines are in place and regular checks of anchors are completed by the organisation managing the venue
- Or
- There is easy walking access to the top rope anchors or safe access using a pre-fixed line
 - There are fixed anchors (bolts and chains), bollards, trees or threads
 - The Leader has visited the site previously and had their setup approved by an NZOIA Rock 1 or 2 holder
 - Personal safety can be set up simply using fixed anchors, bollards, trees or threads

The following are examples of venues that could be within the scope of a Rock Leader depending on the characteristics of the group, weather conditions and equipment. Not all climbs at these crags will be within scope:

Castle Hill – Arthurs Pass	Wharepapa South
Albert Tce and Cattle Stop– Port Hills	Tihoi
Mt Horrible, Spur Road – Timaru	Artificial Climbing walls
Hospital Flat – Wanaka	Kinloch – Lake Taupo
Mt Eden Quarry – short side	

Prerequisites

Be a current Registered Member or working under an Affiliated Membership of NZOIA

Be 18 years old or over

Hold a current First Aid Certificate

Have the following experience as evidence in a logbook:

Personal experience - have climbed at least 20 routes (including grade 14 or above) while on a top rope at either indoor or outdoor venues

Instructional experience – at least 5 days additional experience as a co-leader or assistant leader, providing assistance with the set up and management of a group climbing at indoor and/or outdoor venues

The prerequisite experience requirements are minimums, extra days are recommended.

Registration and Revalidation

Registration and revalidation with NZOIA provide proof of currency for NZOIA qualification holders.

Progressing to NZOIA Rock 1 or Sport Climbing

As the Rock Leader gains more experience they may progress towards gaining the NZOIA Rock 1 or Sport Climbing qualifications. The steps they would follow include:

- Gaining the experience outlined in the NZOIA Rock 1 or Sport Climbing prerequisites
- Attending an NZOIA Rock 1 or Sport Climbing training course
- Working with a NZOIA Rock 1, 2 of Sport Climbing holder

Syllabus

Assessment Notes

The syllabus outlines what the content of the assessment will include and gives an idea of what assessment tasks the candidate will be asked to complete. All judgements on how the candidate meets the syllabus must be based on current good practice and industry standards.

- Assessors can use three types of direct evidence to judge a candidate's competency:
 - Workbook answers
 - Observation of practical tasks
 - Questioning and discussion
- Anchor point selection is not required for this assessment – anchor points need to be selected and checked by the Assessor
- Candidates are expected to know and follow a system – they are not expected to be flexible in their setup
- Candidates are required to demonstrate setting up and using personal safety at the top of a route. If personal safety is not needed at the selected venue the Assessor will need to provide an opportunity for this to be demonstrated. This could be demonstrated at ground level if the crag does not lend itself to doing this task at height.
- Demonstration of knots and hitches is likely to be done during the top rope system setup but if not seen (e.g. clove hitch/prusik) will need to be demonstrated separately
- Candidates are required to demonstrate setting up an anchor system. If haul cords are used at the venue the Assessor will need to provide an opportunity for an anchor set up to be demonstrated. Candidates are also required to demonstrate linking two and three anchors. Both these requirements could also be demonstrated at ground level if the crag does not lend itself to doing this task at height.
- Candidates are required to provide clients with effective instruction in bouldering activities and spotting. If the venue is not suitable for bouldering then this can be assessed using questioning and discussion.

Technical Competence

1. Demonstrate and/or describe the care and correct use of rock climbing equipment and clothing

The candidate will:

- 1.1** Use equipment that is in good condition and is well maintained
- 1.2** Complete a pre-activity check of equipment for damage
- 1.3** Use equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and current good practice
- 1.4** Correctly fit their harness and helmet

- 1.5 For all equipment used demonstrate and/or be able to describe: the properties, common use, advantages, limitations, minimisation of wear, damage checking and storage
- 1.6 Demonstrate uncoiling and coiling a rope
- 1.7 Demonstrate the fitting of an improvised chest harness and be able to describe the types of client that would need one
- 1.8 Carry and use the appropriate clothing for the environmental conditions

2. Construct a top rope climbing system

The candidate will construct at least two top rope climbing systems using fixed anchors (bolts, chains), bollards, trees or threads which demonstrate:

- 2.1 Using secure anchors which; minimise potential shock loading, share the load, have minimal angles, have redundancy and allow ropes to run smoothly and minimise wear
- 2.2 The rope positioned over the intended route

The candidate will demonstrate:

- 2.3 Linking two and three anchors together
- 2.4 Setting up and using personal safety at the top of a route when appropriate to do so
- 2.5 Correctly tying and using the following knots; clove hitch, figure 8, prusik, tape knot

3. Demonstrate safe and efficient climbing techniques

The candidate will complete at least two climbs of grade 14 or above, when on a top rope and demonstrate:

- 3.1 Tying into the climbing rope
- 3.2 A systematic safety check before climbing
- 3.3 Clear communication with the belayer using agreed calls
- 3.4 Safe, balanced and efficient movement

4. Demonstrate safe belaying technique

The candidate will belay at least two times and demonstrate:

- 4.1 Using both a manual locking (i.e ATC) and break-assisted (i.e GriGri) belay device
- 4.2 Threading the rope through the belay device and attaching to self
- 4.3 A systematic safety check before the climber leaves the ground
- 4.4 Good practice belay technique
- 4.5 Clear communication with the climber using agreed calls
- 4.6 Anticipating the climber's movement and providing slack and tension as required
- 4.7 Lowering the climber safely, smoothly and efficiently

5. Demonstrate rock climbing rescue skills

The candidate will demonstrate:

- 5.1** Un-weighting a jammed belay device using the climber for assistance or assistance from others on the ground while ensuring the belayer doesn't let go of the *dead* rope
- 5.2** Un-weighting a jammed belay device using a prusik or jamming device while ensuring the belayer doesn't let go of the *dead* rope
- 5.3** An understanding of how to avoid and deal with other common problems e.g. a stuck climber, too much slack

The Environment

6. Obtain a weather forecast and apply weather interpretation skills

The candidate will:

- 6.1** Obtain a relevant weather forecast for the planned climbing session and provide a verbal summary of the forecast
- 6.2** Describe the implications of the weather forecast for the planned climbing session and make decisions about the session based on the forecast
- 6.3** Observe any changes to the weather and modify the session if necessary

7. Demonstrate cultural and environmental knowledge and interpretation of areas visited

The candidate will provide interpretive information about:

- 7.1** The natural or cultural history of the area
- 7.2** Local flora and fauna

8. Role model and promote accepted environmental practices

The candidate will:

- 8.1** Demonstrate and/or describe the responsibilities to land owners and other users, including access protocols
- 8.2** Role model and promote the principles of Leave No Trace

Group Management and Leadership

9. Lead and manage a group for an introductory rock climbing session

The candidate will be responsible for a group of clients rock climbing for a minimum of one hour. This will include managing two top ropes. The candidate will demonstrate:

- 9.1** Preparing and briefing the group including setting boundaries/safe areas and ground rules
- 9.2** Manage time appropriately in relation to the activity plan and conditions
- 9.3** Coaching, encouraging, motivating clients to ensure they are interested, engaged and have a fun and positive experience
- 9.4** Supervising and coaching belayers and back-up belayers
- 9.5** Establishing rapport with clients and an awareness of their emotional, cultural and other needs
- 9.6** Demonstrate professionalism e.g. punctual, personal equipment correct and in good order, presentable, respect for others

10. Demonstrate effective safety management

The candidate will:

- 10.1** Demonstrate checking the climbing routes used for hazards e.g. loose rocks
- 10.2** Have a first aid kit and be able to deal with first aid situations as required
- 10.3** Never compromise their personal safety or the safety of their clients
- 10.4** Demonstrate safe practices and good judgement and decision making within the scope of this qualification

Instruction

11. Plan and prepare an introductory rock climbing experience

From the operations safety management plan the candidate will prepare a written activity plan which will contain the following information:

- 11.1** A clearly defined purpose and session appropriate for the group
- 11.2** A logical sequence of progressions and activities
- 11.3** Access, cultural or environmental considerations
- 11.4** A clothing and equipment list for both individuals and the group
- 11.5** A weather forecast and implications for the proposed trip
- 11.6** Risk and hazard identification and management
- 11.7** Emergency contacts and procedures
- 11.8** Intentions form

12. Instruct a group in the rock climbing skills required for a positive introductory experience

The candidate will provide clients with effective instruction in the following rock climbing skills:

- 12.1** Fitting of harnesses and helmets
- 12.2** Bouldering activities and spotting (refer to assessment notes above)
- 12.3** Climbing movement
- 12.4** Use of belay device
- 12.5** A systematic safety check before climbing
- 12.6** Clear communication between belayer and climber using agreed calls
- 12.7** Safe and efficient belaying technique and use of back-up belayers
- 12.8** Transition to lowering

The candidate will use:

- 12.9** A logical sequence of progressions
- 12.10** Clear demonstrations and explanations