

West Sussex Scouts Rock Climbing Syllabus

There are four levels of authorisation available:

- a) Climbing and abseiling on artificial structures
- b) Climbing on Southern Sandstone
- c) Climbing and abseiling on single pitch crags
- d) Multi pitch climbing

The following table indicates what is required for the first three levels of authorisation shown above.

Multi pitch climbing requires the same as (c) but requires these skills to be developed to a much greater degree.

Section	Artificial structures	Southern Sandstone crags	Single pitch crags
1.1 - 1.7	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.1	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.2	Yes (a) to (e) only	Yes (a) to (e) only	Yes
2.3	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.4	No	Yes	Yes
3.1/3.2	No	Yes	Yes
3.3	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.1	No	Yes (a) to (c) only	Yes
4.2	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.4	Yes (e) and (f) only	Yes excluding (c) and (d)	Yes

The section number in the table above relates to the following:

1. Group supervision

1.1 Demonstrate

- a) Ability to manage groups of an appropriate size in a safe manner, including tying on, climbing, belaying and descent arrangements.
- b) Choice and use of appropriate equipment suitable for type group and the chosen venue.
- c) Ability to manage all members of the group irrespective of whether or not they are involved in climbing/belaying.
- d) Awareness of rules governing the use of different climbing walls, particularly as related to groups under supervision.

1.2 Be able to choose routes at the crag and/or wall suitable for use by the group, including considerations of safety of route, approach and decent and effects on other users.

1.3 Be able to organise and arrange effective communication between the group members.

1.4 Be familiar with a variety of safe belaying and top roping methods and be able to select the appropriate method for a particular situation and group.

- a) Single and multiple anchors
- b) Various belay devices
- c) Direct and indirect belays
- d) Supervision of group members belaying
- e) Top and bottom roping

1.5 Be able to set up and manage a group abseil in a safe and appropriate manner, including:

- a) Choice of site - take off, loose rock, effect on climbing resource.
- b) Methods of safeguarding the group.

1.6 Be aware of, and be able to deal with, common place problems in top rope and abseil situations:

- a) "Stuck" climber
- b) "Stuck" abseiler

1.7 Be familiar with, and demonstrate the use of, bouldering activities with groups.

- a) On climbing walls
- b) On crags

2. Climbing - Knowledge of the activity

2.1 Leaders at any level must have first hand knowledge of the wall/outcrop/climbing area to be used.

- 2.2 Equipment - know the construction, specification, operation and care of:
- Climbing ropes, abseil ropes, accessory cords and tapes (coiling, carrying, storing)
 - Different types and styles of harnesses and helmets
 - Belay and friction devices
 - Screw gate and snap gate karabiners
 - Suitable clothing and footwear
 - Current protection devices, e.g. jamming (nuts etc.) and cramming (friends etc.) together with their advantages and disadvantages.
- 2.3 Be able to tie the following climbing knots quickly and competently; figure of eight, bowline, double fisherman's, tape knot, Italian hitch, clove hitch.
- 2.4 Have a knowledge of guide books, their availability, interpretation and use.

3. The crag environment

3.1 Access

- Understand and be able to use the access information contained in the most recent guidebook to the climbing area and where appropriate carry out any recommendations contained therein.
- Have an awareness and understanding of the issues and problems affecting access to climbing areas.

3.2 Conservation

- Be aware of and demonstrate good practice in the conservation of the crag environment.
- Be aware of locally important species and features and the legal situation related to them.
- Be familiar with and observe current Access and Conservation guidelines (e.g. Country Code, Tread Lightly)

3.3 Etiquette

- Be aware of local climbing ethics, particularly those relating to single pitch cliffs.
- Be able to operate flexibly when planning programmes and chose routes so as to accommodate independent climbers.
- Be aware of the hazards and limitations imposed on independent climbers by group use of crags.
- Be aware of the need to operate in a style which minimises the impact on, and risk to, other climbers.
- Manage groups as so as to leave the crags/walls in an improved condition.
- Be aware of the needs of other climbers when using climbing wall equipment (e.g. mats, in-situ top ropes etc.)

4. Personal competence

4.1 Anchors

Demonstrate an ability to chose suitable anchors in a variety of situations:

- Spikes and blocks
- Threads, chockstones and trees
- Stakes, bolts and pitons
- Nuts and camming devices

And be able to connect the climber to the above anchors.

4.2 Belaying

Be able to:

- Set up sound systems to single and multiple anchors for self and others; connect self and others to the rope; connect self and others to anchors, set up top and bottom rope systems.
- Demonstrate a variety of different belay techniques and chose the most appropriate for given situations.
- Demonstrate an ability to hold falls and perform lowers.

4.3 Abseiling

- Set up fixed and releasable abseils.
- Choose and fit suitable harnesses and sling arrangements.
- Demonstrate the operation of a variety of different friction devices and chose appropriate devices for given situations.
- Identify and solve common abseiling problems including tangles, jamming, inadvertent locking, pendulums etc.

4.4 Climbing

- Read and interpret guide books effectively.
- Chose and climb routes suited to one's ability.
- Be able to lead confidently at two grades above the grade being undertaken by the participants
- Place suitable runners to protect the leader and arrange appropriate belays to protect the second.
- Have a basic knowledge of safety chains and fall factors.
- Have good prior knowledge of chosen climbing wall/crag wherever possible.