



GENERAL NOTES FOR ROCK CLIMBING INSTRUCTORS

These notes are specifically aimed at MDT Rock Climbing Instructors and candidate instructors

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Professionalism

Rock Climbing Instructors are expected to show a high level of climbing skills and personal professionalism, far above any of the lower MDT qualifications. At all times the RCI needs to also demonstrate above average knowledge of the subject. To gain this level they will need to be constantly improving their skills base in personal climbing, instructing and in periphery issues such as conservation of the environment, mountain rescue and group management.

When instructing it is considered usual for a RCI to be well turned out and punctual. Instructors need to always have clean, well maintained and fully serviceable ropes and other equipment. There is no place for out of date equipment in the RCI's rack. Their clothes should also be clean and of modern fabrics as is appropriate to mountaineering.

Supervising beginners

Always keep student climbers in a safe area where they can be seen at all times. This area should be safe from rock fall and not near the edge of other cliffs. The safe area should be pointed out to all beginners present. The cliff where other members of the party are going to be climbing, should be in sight from the safe area. This prevents boredom and helps to show students what is expected of them. Make sure students do not deface trees or rocks or leave litter. They must also be told not to throw stones over cliff edges.

To help prevent boredom and increase skills, it is useful to have students practising knot tying, etc. while waiting to climb. It can also be useful to have fewer harnesses than beginners. This ensures that they need to take off and refit a harness several times and in doing so practise the skill.

Always brief the group on what will be expected of them on the rock face. Pay attention to climbing style, hand and foot - work and the lowering off procedure in the case of a top rope configuration.

Always have a safe area in which to keep the extra pieces of climbing kit. This area must be a different one to where the beginners are.

Safety in the cliff environment (all)

- *All participants to wear a helmet while climbing or near to the cliff area.
- *Be aware of windy conditions near the cliff edge.
- *Warn members below of your presence.
- *Remove all loose rock.
- *Double check everything.
- *Buddy checks.
- *When a rock or rope is dropped off the cliff, use the call "**BELOW !**".
- *Do not crowd around the edge of a cliff.