

# **ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL ROCKWALLS: MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR GROUP USE**

**These guidelines refer to use of the rockwall by groups who are led by appropriately qualified instructors.**

**They do not extend to use of the rockwall by individual members of the public.**

**The guidelines in this document need to be implemented in conjunction with the standard operating procedures for rockwalls given in the council's safety policy.**

1. All instructors must report and sign in at.....
2. No one other than the Instructor or centre staff is allowed access to the equipment store
3. Instructors should familiarise themselves with the nearest exit. In the event of the Fire Alarm signalling, users should leave by the nearest Fire Exit and make their way to the assembly point, which is.....

## **Rockwall: Conditions for Use**

### **Unroped Climbing**

Provided that unroped climbing takes place within the terms that follow, then it may be supervised by any responsible adult:

- Climbing helmets must be worn by all users of the wall
- Where there are no safety mats, unroped climbers should not have their feet higher than 0.5m above ground level
- Where safety mats are present, unroped climbers should not have their feet higher than 1m above the level of the mats
- Unroped climbers should be accompanied by a 'spotter', who can assist them in moving between holds, provide physical support where necessary and safely direct a slip
- Instructors/supervisors must ensure that the number of climbers on and in the vicinity of the wall does not compromise the safety of those climbing. There should be no possibility of a slip from the wall resulting in a climber landing on top of another person, and climbers need to have enough space on the wall to avoid contact with other climbers.

## **Roped climbing**

### **Qualifications**

All instructors must hold a recognised qualification to lead a group on the wall. Recognised qualifications are:

- Aberdeenshire Rockwall Approval\*\*
- Climbing Wall award
- Single Pitch Award
- Mountain instructor Award
- Mountain Instructor Certificate
- Mountain Guide
- Other\*

\*The suitability of qualifications held by instructors other than the specific qualifications noted above must be checked with the Adventure Activities Consultant.

\*\* The Aberdeenshire Rockwall Approval is an employment based award and is ONLY valid in the context of work for Aberdeenshire Council. It is NOT valid for working with independent groups.

### **Ratios**

For information on appropriate ratios, instructors should refer to the council's Standard Operating Procedures for this activity

### **Equipment**

- All equipment must be signed in and out and its use logged.
- All equipment must be checked by the instructor before and after use for signs of wear. If any damage to the equipment is found, the damage must be logged and reported to: .....
- The Instructor must ensure that all equipment issued fits correctly and that the students understand its safe use.
- All users will wear appropriate climbing helmets when in the immediate vicinity of the wall.
- If anyone is to be climbing more than 1 metre above ground level, they must wear a harness and be attached to a rope.
- Swapping of equipment between users should be avoided.
- Screwgate karabiners must be used for all body attachments.
- Screwgate karabiners will be used for all main anchor points unless fixed ring systems are still in place.
- Any faulty equipment which is owned by the council must be removed from use, clearly marked as faulty pending repair. The Adventure Activity Consultant will decide whether an item is able to be repaired or disposed of and do so accordingly.

- All equipment will be subject to an annual recorded check of its condition by the Adventure Activities Consultant.

### **Top Ropes**

All walls should have tracer lines permanently fixed to each individual climb which are tied away safely out of reach when wall is not in use. A tracer line is a piece of string suspended from an anchor point, the ends of which must reach the floor.

Top ropes will be set up by tying the end of the rope to the tracer line. The rope should then be pulled up and through the anchor using the tracer line, returning the end to ground level. The tracer line should then be untied from the rope and set aside until the end of the session when the process should be reversed, leaving the tracer line in place.

### **Storage of Tracer Lines**

When not in use, the tracer lines should be stored either behind the 'kick-boards', if they are still in place, or where the kick boards are not in place, the tracer lines should be tied off to holds which have been installed on the climbing wall.

### **Bolt-on holds/Wall fixings**

- All holds on the climbing wall should be treated like natural rock and treated with caution. Loose holds or faults should be logged and reported to.....
- Pre-activity checks by instructor should ensure that the holds are clean and free from obstructions.
- Lighting levels and temperature should be suitable for the activity.
- The area around the wall must be free from obstruction. Any concerns should be reported to.....

### **Fault Reporting**

Where a fault has been discovered the following procedure must be followed:

1. The fault and its location must be logged and reported to.....
2. Where the fault cannot be rectified immediately and cannot be removed, a "Do Not Use" sign should be attached to the relevant piece of equipment, area etc.
3. A 'fault report' should be completed by.....
4. For faulty equipment, the item of equipment should be withdrawn from use and the Adventure Activity Consultant contacted for advice.
5. Faults or concerns related to the wall and it's fixtures should be directed to Property Services via.....who will then contact the Contractor responsible for the installation and maintenance of this facility

### **Accident/Incident reporting**

- All accidents and incidents should be reported to .....immediately.
- Where there is a requirement for a First Aider, contact.....
- All reports will be dealt with following the procedures specified in the Aberdeenshire Council Safety Policy.
- Where necessary an Aberdeenshire Council Accident/Incident/Minor Injury form should be completed. A photocopy should be made and the Community Learning Officer must receive the original. Normal Aberdeenshire Council procedure should be followed for the appropriate situation.
- A copy of the relevant incident or accident report should be taken and forwarded to.....
- Near misses, minor injuries etc should be reported on the council's accident and sickness absence data base

### **Child Protection**

Instructors should familiarise themselves with the council's Child Protection Policy and should operate in accordance with this policy at all times.