



Nottingham Trent
University

Climbing and Mountaineering

Risk assessment

Version: 2

Date: September 2025

1. Risk Assessment

Risk Assessors Name (Student)	Arthur Hansen
Accountable Managers Name	Steven Drake
Date of Completion	27/05/25
Location	Indoor climbing and bouldering walls Various outdoor climbing locations Glaciers and mountain ranges
Task, Process or Activity Description	Indoor climbing at various climbing centres Climbing crags throughout the UK and Europe Snow and ice climbing throughout the UK and Europe Overnight Stay in bunkhouses or tents Walking to and from crags Driving to locations
Persons at Risk – Affected Groups	staff/students/visitors/Other Climbers.

Ref	Potential Hazard	Existing Controls	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Level	Additional Controls Required	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Level
Hill and Mountain Walking									
1	Low-level slips and trips	<p>Participants are made aware of the correct type of footwear needed for the walk and the consequences of slips or trips.</p> <p>The group carries a 1st aid kit along with emergency procedures and contact details.</p> <p>The group should have at least one qualified 1st aider per 10 participants in the event of an accident.</p> <p>Specific hazards are pointed out to the group by the leader whilst on the walk, e.g. a particularly slippery section of the path.</p> <p>All participants are over 18 and are made aware of the risks associated with the activity; therefore, they will take some of the responsibility for participation themselves.</p>	2	2	4				
2	Serious falls involving drops of over 1m.	<p>Participants are made aware of the correct type of footwear needed for the walk they are undertaking to minimise the risk and the consequences of slips or falls.</p> <p>The group carries a 1st aid kit along with emergency procedures and contact details.</p> <p>The group should have at least one qualified 1st aider in the event of an accident.</p> <p>Specific hazards are pointed out to the group by the leader whilst on the walk, e.g. a particularly slippery section of path.</p>	4	1	4				

		<p>All participants are over 18 and are made aware that there are risks associated with the activity and therefore should take some of the responsibility for participation themselves.</p> <p>The route is planned with consideration of the competence of the group and the number of participants and leaders. This minimises the chance of people finding themselves in unmanageable situations which result in serious injury.</p> <p>Routes must be approved by the outdoor CDO, which gives an extra point of control.</p> <p>Trip planners are made aware of the importance of route planning and the necessity to be realistic about their competency. A strong ethos of good practice and sensible route setting should eliminate this problem.</p>							
3	Losing individuals	<p>The trip leader has a list of all those who are on the trip and counts them in and out of each activity to ensure that they are not left behind. This includes each time the group returns to the minibus prior to departure.</p> <p>The participant-to-leader ratios are such that a leader can always notice if someone is missing.</p> <p>Where necessary, two leaders are used at the front and the rear of the walking party to ensure no one is left behind or goes the wrong way.</p> <p>All participants are over 18 and are made aware that there are risks associated with the activity and, therefore, should take some of the responsibility for participation</p>	4	1	4				

		<p>themselves. This includes endeavouring not to become detached from the leading group.</p> <p>Count off at regular stopping locations to ensure no one has separated from the group.</p>							
4	Group getting lost	<p>The leader should only lead on routes well within their navigation capabilities.</p> <p>On days of poor visibility, bad weather routes may be taken, and one or more significant features followed to minimise the risk of becoming lost.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the walk leader to pay attention to the route and employ proper navigational strategy, e.g. use of legs and tick-off features. This should mean that any time the group deviates from the planned route, it should either be a deliberate act or quickly recognised and rectified.</p>	4	1	4				
5	Being injured by Animals	<p>Be wary when going through fields, and cattle or other animals may also be there.</p> <p>Keep a distance from cattle or other animals</p>	4	1	4				
Indoor Climbing and Bouldering									
6	Physical trauma	<p>All members must read and adhere to the Centre's specific rules and regulations.</p> <p>New members are supervised by Committee members, competent club members, and the centre's in-house staff.</p> <p>All club members are made aware of the potential dangers of climbing via the BMC participation statement.</p>	2	1	2	Climbing committee members are attend additional training on who to work with beginner climbers.	2	1	2
7	Bouldering	Warm up before climbing.	2	1	2				

	Physical trauma	Use spotters on poor landing areas. Climbers are advised to climb down rather than jump.							
8	Falling from height (Top Rope)	Members are only to climb on the wall when properly attached to a suitable belay system. Before being allowed to climb, all new members are taught how to tie in with the figure of eight knots, correctly put on a harness, and belay safely.	2	1	2				
9	Falling from height (Bouldering)	Members are told that the matting under the climbing wall does not remove the danger of injury and are reminded and encouraged to climb down from the wall rather than jump.	2	2	4				
10	Falling from height (lead Climbing)	Members can only climb on the wall when properly attached to a suitable belay system. Introduction to lead climbing must be progressive and commensurate. First, leads must be supervised by an experienced member or coach with additional training. Before being allowed to climb independently, all members are taught how to tie in with the figure of eight knots, correctly put on a harness, and belay safely.	2	1	2	The climbing committee are given additional training on how to teach lead climbing.	2	1	2
11	Indoor Climbing Holds	Site-specific risk assessment. All members must read and adhere to the Centre's rules and regulations.	1	1	1				

		Spinning holds must be reported to a staff member at the climbing wall as soon as it is detected.							
12	Injuries caused by overexertion or fatigue.	Members are to climb, keeping in mind their limits and not pushing themselves when tired. Scheduled breaks, access to water, and participant education on proper hydration and recovery.	4	1	4	Monitor participants during sessions and provide immediate support if signs of fatigue are noticed.	4	1	4
Outdoor Climbing									
13	Bouldering Physical trauma	Warm up before climbing. Use mats on all problems. Use spotters on poor landing areas. Novice members will be supervised by either the committee with additional training or by experienced members. A comprehensive training plan will be put in place for new club members	2	2	4				
14	Top Roping Physical trauma	Before being allowed to climb independently, all members are taught how to tie in with the figure of eight knots, correctly put on a harness, and belay. The clubs' first aid-trained members and a first aid kit are available at all outdoor sessions. Novice members will be supervised either by the committee members who have had additional training or by experienced members. A comprehensive training plan will be put in place for new club members	2	1	2	The climbing committee are given additional training on how to lead these sessions safely.	2	1	2

15	Lead Climbing Physical trauma	<p>Introduction to lead climbing must be progressive and commensurate.</p> <p>Potential leaders should have received instruction on placing gear and belay building by the club's head coach before members can lead climb outdoors.</p> <p>First, leads must be supervised by an experienced member or coach.</p> <p>A comprehensive training plan will be put in place for new club members</p>	4	2	8	The climbing committee are given additional training to lead these sessions safely.			
16	Falling object Physical trauma	<p>All NTU Climbing members must wear helmets while climbing, belaying or near the crag.</p> <p>Risks are explained to all members.</p>	2	1	2				
17	Stuck Climber Hypothermia, physical trauma	<p>Senior members of the club are made aware of methods to assist stuck climbers (top rope, leaders). Routes that avoid large ledges on which climbers can become stuck are chosen.</p>	2	1	2				
18	Anchor Failure Physical trauma	<p>All lead climbers are to ensure belays are built according to best practices.</p> <p>Aspirant leaders must be supervised by a competent person when setting up belays.</p>	4	2	8				
19	Injuries caused by overexertion or fatigue.	<p>Members are to climb, keeping in mind their limits and not pushing themselves when tired.</p>	1	1	1				
Cooking									

20	Food poisoning	All people cooking should adhere to basic hygiene, e.g. washing hands and ensuring against cross-contamination.	1	1	1				
21	Burns	Members are advised to use common sense in cooking locations and utensils. Club first aiders are aware of how to treat burn injuries.	1	1	1				
Equipment									
22	Lead rack failure Physical trauma	Follow the manufacturer's recommended care and maintenance instructions. All equipment is inspected thoroughly at regular points throughout the year and before use. Any suspected damage is to be reported to CDO or the coach at the earliest opportunity and placed out of use until further notice. Club members are shown examples of kits while being trained so that they may recognise broken equipment.	4	1	4	The climbing committee are given additional training to monitor and maintain their equipment.	4	1	4
23	Climbing ropes and slings Physical trauma	Follow the manufacturer's recommended care and maintenance instructions. Ropes are retired in accordance with their manufacturer's recommendations, as well as being inspected thoroughly at regular intervals.	4	1	4	The climbing committee are given additional training to monitor and maintain their equipment.	4	1	4
24	Gas cooking stoves Escape of gas leading to an explosion	All people using cooking stoves are instructed to familiarise themselves with the instructions before use. Replacement of used gas bottles with new ones should be done in an open, well-ventilated place away from the cooking area	2	1	2				

		<p>with no naked flames nearby, in the event of some gas escaping from the bottle.</p> <p>If a person is unsure how to change the gas, they should not attempt to do it themselves but seek advice.</p> <p>When cooking has ceased, all gas stoves should be turned off properly.</p>							
25	Burns	<p>All people using cooking stoves are instructed to familiarise themselves with the instructions prior to use.</p> <p>Safe practices regarding the positioning of the stove for cooking and the movement of people around the stove should be taught to new people, e.g. do not step over the stove.</p> <p>People should be advised to tie back long hair when cooking on the stove and also secure any loose clothing to prevent these items from catching fire and causing serious harm.</p> <p>After cooking, the stove must be left to cool prior to packing away.</p> <p>Pots should only be picked up using the handle, and where possible, the handle should be removed from the pot during cooking, only to be used for picking up and moving the pot.</p>	1	2	2				
26	Use of knives for cooking cuts	<p>All people using knives should make sure they handle them with care.</p> <p>Chopping boards should be used for cutting up food.</p> <p>Any knives being carried for personal use should be kept securely and appropriately</p>	1	2	2				

Travel

27	Minibus Physical trauma	<p>Only MIDAS-registered club members are permitted to drive the Minibus.</p> <p>The student union's minibus rules should be adhered to at all times.</p>	4	1	4			
28	Travel to and from events- Breakdown	<p>As per NTSU Rules for drivers.</p> <p>Drivers are only to drive for a maximum of two hours and then swap to a different driver.</p>	4	1	4			
29	Car/Minibus accident	<p>Minibus drivers are tested and approved by the University.</p> <p>Insurance in place</p> <p>adhere to both the requirements of 'The Road Traffic Act' and 'The Highway Code</p> <p>Seatbelts are always worn.</p> <p>MIDAS training has been completed by all drivers</p>	4	1	4			

Environment

30	Hyperthermia, sunburn	<p>PPE appropriate to the weather conditions carried by participants and leaders. The party is led by trained and experienced leaders.</p> <p>Reminders on the need to drink plenty of fluids and apply sunscreen.</p> <p>Specialist Mountain forecasts are consulted where available.</p>	1	2	2				
31	Hypothermia, frostnip, frostbite	<p>PPE appropriate to weather conditions carried by participants and leaders. The</p>	2	2	4	Winter mountain leaders/guides will take responsibility for this.	2	1	2

		<p>party is led by trained and experienced leaders.</p> <p>Constant monitoring of the group and checks to determine morale.</p> <p>Specialist Mountain forecasts are consulted where available.</p>							
32	Wet Weather Slipping	Change location or activity if conditions are too dangerous.	4	1	4				
33	Slips, trips & falls during ascent/descent. Physical trauma in mountain ranges	<p>Routes chosen are appropriate for the experience of the group and prevailing conditions.</p> <p>Trained & experienced leaders supervise participants.</p> <p>Appropriate footwear.</p> <p>Risks are explained to all participants.</p> <p>Climbers are made aware of the situation at the top of the Crag and must be tied in when near the edge</p>	2	2	4	Summer mountain leaders/guides will take responsibility for this.	2	1	2
34	Water hazards, swollen rivers, glacial pools in mountain ranges Drowning, hypothermia, physical trauma	<p>Specialist Mountain forecasts are consulted where available.</p> <p>Routes chosen are appropriate for the experience of the group and prevailing conditions.</p> <p>Trained & experienced leaders supervise participants.</p> <p>Risks are explained to all participants.</p>	2	2	4	Summer mountain leaders/guides will take responsibility for this.	2	1	2
35	Glacier travel Hypothermia, physical trauma	Routes chosen are appropriate for the experience of the group and prevailing conditions.	4	3	12	Winter mountain leaders/guides will take responsibility for this.	2	1	2

		<p>Trained & experienced leaders supervise participants.</p> <p>Risks are explained to all participants.</p> <p>All participants understand crevasse rescue.</p>							
36	<p>Avalanche</p> <p>Hypothermia, physical trauma</p>	<p>Specialist Mountain forecasts are consulted where available.</p> <p>Routes chosen are appropriate for the experience of the group and prevailing conditions.</p> <p>All understand essential avalanche awareness.</p> <p>Risks are explained to all participants.</p> <p>All understand immediate search drills.</p>	4	3	12	<p>Winter mountain leaders/guides will take responsibility for this.</p>	2	1	2
37	<p>Altitude</p> <p>Acute mountain sickness (AMS), Pulmonary or Cerebral Oedema (HAPE & HACE)</p>	<p>Plan acclimatisation as per the current accepted best practice.</p> <p>All participants must be able to recognise symptoms of AMS, HAPE & HACE.</p> <p>All participants must know the treatment for AMS.</p> <p>All participants have reached a specified level of fitness.</p>	4	3	12	<p>Winter mountain leaders/guides will take responsibility for this.</p>	2	1	2
38	Sunburn	<p>Use high-protection factor sunscreen.</p> <p>Reminders on the need to drink plenty of fluids and apply sunscreen.</p>	2	1	2				
First Aid									
39	Injuries during activity and	All sessions will have a First Aider on call, or a First Aider will attend the sessions.	6	1	6				

	medical emergencies	A first Aid kit is to be taken when travelling away from the university. First aiders and trip leaders are given the university information on what to do in a medical emergency.							
40	Medical emergencies <i>Cardiac issues</i>	First aid kits available, staff trained in CPR/AED use. In remote areas, CPR may only be available. 999 to be called immediately.	6	1	6				

2. Actions Required

Ref	Action to be taken	Action Owner	Date to be completed	Actual Completion Date
1 & 2	Trip leader to complete the Trip Registration by showing the nominated first aider	Trip Leader	14 days before each trip	
2	Trip leaders to assemble a first kit and take it with them. Trip planning will take place before trips take place. Routes approved	Trip Leader Trip leader Trip Leader	7 days before each trip 3 weeks before the trip 7 day before the trip	
3	Trip list collected from NTU Sport Reception	Trip Leader	24 hours before the trip	

6	Committee members attend additional training on how to work with novice climbers.	Committee & CDO	Start of term one and ongoing	
8	Members new to climbing are taught the basic methods to keep themselves and others safe in a climbing wall environment by either a committee member, experienced members or a coach.	Committee, experienced members, CDO and Coach	Ongoing	
9	All members are to be shown the participant's BMC statement about the risk of climbing. When accessing a new venue, they will be asked to complete an acceptance of risk form which explains the dangers of climbing.	Committee and climbing venues.	ongoing	
10	Additional training is given to experienced committee members to support lead climb training. The club coach oversees this.	Committee and Coach	Term 2 and 3	
13	The committee are given additional training to work with novice climbers. Training plans are designed and implemented by the club coach.	Committee, CDO Coach	Oct 23 Ongoing	
14	The committee are given additional training to work with novice climbers.	Committee, CDO	Oct 23	
15	The experienced committee members are given additional training on lead climbing outdoors and are used to support the club coach in getting members to lead climb. Training is planned and delivered by the club coach.	Coach and CDO	Ongoing Ongoing	
21	The club checks that the cooking equipment is safe before any trip takes place.	Committee	7 days before trip	
22	Committee members are trained on how to check climbing equipment via their coach.	Committee, Coach	ongoing	
22	The equipment officer will keep updated records of climbing equipment, including the number of falls a rope has had.	Equipment Officer	Ongoing	
23	Trip participants are to take responsibility for familiarising themselves with the camping stoves.	Committee.	Day one of the trip	

24	Using a camping stove is explained in the pre-trip meeting.	Committee & CDO	Before the trip takes place.	
26	NTSU minibuses' rules are made available to all drivers via the NTSU SharePoint site.	NTSU	Ongoing	
27	NTSU support documents for breakdowns are available to all drivers and are stored in each vehicle.	NTSU	ongoing	
28	Additional driver training is given to all drivers who drive the NTSU vehicles.	NTSU	ongoing	
30 & 38	First aiders cover sunburn on their first aid course. Trip leaders should check the weather forecast before and during any trip.	Trip First aider Trip Leader	14 days before trip	
31	First aiders cover signs and symptoms of hypothermia, frostnip, and frostbite on their first aid course.	Trip First Aider	14 days before trip	
32	The trip leader will decide on any changes to plans due to poor weather.	Trip leader.	ongoing	
33 & 34	Mountain leaders are used when in mountain ranges to guide and lead groups.	Committee and CDO	4 weeks before the trip	
33,34, 35,36,37	In winter conditions, a winter mountain leader will lead the group.	Committee and CDO	4 weeks before the trip	
39	The club committee and club development officer will arrange for members to attend adequate first-aid courses. Committee members and trip leaders have access to the university medical emergency flow chart to support them in getting access to help from the department.	Committee and CDO CDO	Term one Committee training and before each trip.	Term one Term one and ongoing.

All risks should be minimised by continually appraising the participant's condition, the environment and equipment through dynamic risk assessment by the committee & coaches involved. Some risks remain due to the nature of the activity; however, care must be taken to minimise these.

3. Approval and Change Log

		Date
Assessors Signature (Student)	A Hansen	27/05/25
Coach Signature	J Bradshaw	3/3/25
Managers Signature	Steven Drake	28/02/25

Review Number	Description of any changes	Date of Review	Assessors Name	Manager Name
1st Review				
2nd Review				
3rd review				
4th Review				
5th Review				

4. Risk Matrix

LIKELIHOOD	Chance	Probability	Time period
Likely (Score 4)	More than 75%.	More likely than not to occur.	Likely to occur at least once in a three-month period.
Possible (Score 3)	40-75%.	Fairly likely to occur.	Likely to occur once in a one-year period.
Unlikely (Score 2)	10-40%.	Has happened before, but unlikely again.	Unlikely to occur in a one-year period.
Rare (Score 1)	Less than 10%.	Has never happened before.	Unlikely to occur in a five-year period.
IMPACT	Safety		
Minor (Score 1)	Minor incident causing injury possibly requiring first aid treatment/ disease to one or more persons.		
Serious (Score 2)	Significant injury could result in short term absence from work / disease causing short-term issue to one or more persons.		
Major (Score 4)	Major injury possibly requiring hospital attention / disease causing long-term issue / disability to one or more persons.		
Extreme (Score 6)	Fatality or life-threatening injury / disease to one or more persons.		

		Impact			
		Minor (Score 1)	Serious (Score 2)	Major (Score 4)	Extreme (Score 6)
Likelihood	Likely (Score 4)	4 - Acceptable but keep under review	8 - Consider implementing additional controls to reduce the risk	16 - Risk is unacceptable and additional controls MUST be implemented	24 - Risk is unacceptable and additional controls MUST be implemented
	Possible (Score 3)	3 - Acceptable but keep under review	6 - Consider implementing additional controls to reduce the risk	12 - Consider implementing additional controls to reduce the risk	18 - Risk is unacceptable and additional controls MUST be implemented

	Unlikely (Score 2)	2 - Acceptable but keep under review	4 - Acceptable but keep under review	8 - Consider implementing additional controls to reduce the risk	12 - Consider implementing additional controls to reduce the risk
	Rare (Score 1)	1 - Acceptable but keep under review	2 - Acceptable but keep under review	4 - Acceptable but keep under review	6 - Consider implementing additional controls to reduce the risk

5. Sharing the Risk Assessment

All Risk Assessments should be shared with the people listed in the persons affected section (section 1). There is a signing sheet available within the resources section of the H&S Sharepoint.