

Curriculum activity risk assessment

Challenge High Ropes

clever • skilled • creative

Activity scope

This document relates to student participation in High Challenge Ropes as a curriculum activity.

'High challenge' refers to any ropes activity for which the participant's safety can no longer be achieved by spotting, and which requires safety systems such as harnesses, belay systems, specialist safety equipment or other established methods or systems.

High ropes courses enable students to participate in activities which are challenging, which help build self-confidence, determination, cooperation and decision-making skills, and which develop physical attributes such as balance and flexibility.

It is highly recommended that the [Queensland Adventure Activity Standards](#) are referred to when planning this activity.



Risk level

The actual risk level will vary according to the specific circumstances of the activity and these **must** be considered when assessing the inherent risk level and planning the activity. As a starting point, ask the following questions:

- Which students will be involved?
- Where will the students be?
- What will the students be doing?
- Who will be leading the activity?
- What will the students be using?

Risk level		Action required / approval
<input type="checkbox"/>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A <i>Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment</i> must be completed. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Principal or delegated Deputy Principal or Head of Program (i.e. HOD, HOSES, HOC) to review and approve risk assessment. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental permission must be obtained for student participation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Once approved, activity details are to be entered into the <i>School Curriculum Activity Register</i>.

Teachers/leaders:

Activity description:

Start date:

Finish date:

No of students (approx.):

Class groups:

Supervision ratio (approx.):



Queensland Government

Listed below are the minimum recommendations for this type of activity. For any items ticked 'No', provide further information regarding the additional or alternate controls to be implemented for the safe conduct of the activity.

Minimum supervision

Adequate adult supervision is to be provided. In determining what is adequate, consider the number of students, their individual needs, and the nature of the activity. If an adult other than a registered teacher is engaged for instruction, a teacher should be present to take overall responsibility. [Blue Card](#) requirements **must** be adhered to.

- Registered teacher with minimum qualifications as outlined below
- OR**
- An adult with minimum qualifications as outlined below, in the presence of a registered teacher

Other supervisors should be selected from those most suitable for this particular activity. Before they start, the supervisors should be informed of their role, potential hazards and precautions to be taken.

When planning any outdoor activity, the ratio of qualified, experienced leaders to dependent participants needs to be considered. In certain situations, judgement may dictate smaller or larger numbers of participants per leader.

Several variables can affect this decision, including but not limited to:

- nature of the challenge ropes course elements
- line of sight and sound for supervision
- outcomes of the risk management process
- leaders' experience
- participants' expected capabilities (i.e. experience, competence, fitness)
- conditions (environment, weather)
- belay system and transfer (dynamic, static or continuous)
- planned duration of the activity
- number of participants and optimum group size
- remoteness of the activity
- suitability and availability of equipment.

Further information:

Minimum qualifications

The qualifications listed in this section are minimums for each type of situation. Leaders are encouraged to seek training to raise their qualification level above the minimum listed.

- Current first aid qualifications including Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) or ready access to first aid facilities, including qualified personnel.
OR
- Remote Area first aid if operating more than one hour away from emergency services
- [Blue Card](#) requirements met

High — High ropes

Demonstrated skills and currency that meet the leadership, group management, technical capacities and safety requirements (including familiarity with the environment, emergency procedures by all adult participants) of the specific circumstances being addressed

For management of challenge ropes course, a challenge ropes course manager (high ropes) is required. Management can also be carried out by people who have received training from an approved high ropes constructor

For a registered teacher:

- A statement of attainment from a registered training organisation covering the following unit of competence:
 - SROCP002A — Conduct a high ropes session**OR**
- Certificate III in Sport, Outdoor or Community Recreation or higher, with specialisations in appropriate activities
OR
- A registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme, at the level of Challenge Ropes course conductor (High Ropes).

For a leader other than a registered teacher:

- A statement of attainment for a nationally recognised course or Skill Set, at the level of High Ropes conductor, from a Registered Training Organisation
OR
- Certificate III in Sport, Outdoor or Community Recreation or higher, with specialisations in Conducting High Ropes
OR
- A registered leader under the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme, at the level of Challenge Ropes course conductor (High Ropes).

Further information:

Minimum equipment/facilities <i>If 'No' is ticked, provide further information.</i>	Yes	No
First aid kit suitable for activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication system Electronic and other equipment that can be damaged by water is to be carried in water resistant containers. Leaders are responsible for determining the equipment to be carried by all participants. The following communication equipment should be carried as appropriate for the activity and area of operation:		
<input type="checkbox"/> phone-line at location <input type="checkbox"/> mobile phone <input type="checkbox"/> satellite phone/UHF radio <input type="checkbox"/> student/adult messenger Other:		
Vehicular access at all times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate clothing and footwear, taking into account the requirements of the activity and weather conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drinking water (students should not share drinking containers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access ladder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment use and maintenance log to be kept for each session	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Harness and helmet for all participants in line with the following standards and practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> harnesses and helmets compliant with International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation (UIAA), European Community (CE) standard or equivalent. (Refer to UIAA safety standards for more information) <input type="checkbox"/> harnesses to be worn at all times when on course, and to be connected by a safety line (rope or tape) to an appropriate anchor point or belay <input type="checkbox"/> harnesses to be retired by manufacturer's nominated expiry date <input type="checkbox"/> helmets to be worn and secured when on ropes courses 		
A suitably equipped rescue pack, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> an additional safety rope, equivalent in length to twice the height of the highest element or belay wire or anchor point <input type="checkbox"/> knife <input type="checkbox"/> two-three steel karabiners <input type="checkbox"/> cowstails/claws* <input type="checkbox"/> tape (for improvised chest harness) <input type="checkbox"/> two-three prussik loops* <input type="checkbox"/> two-three alloy karabiners* <input type="checkbox"/> belay device* <input type="checkbox"/> pulley <input type="checkbox"/> safety harness connected by a safety line to an appropriate anchor point or belay <input type="checkbox"/> pair of pliers or multi-grips. 		
Further information:		

Governing bodies/associations <i>If 'No' is ticked, provide further information.</i>	Yes	No
It is highly recommended that the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards are referred to when planning this activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further information:		

Hazards and suggested control measures

All persons engaging in this activity should:

- identify the hazards, including any additional hazards not mentioned here
- assess their significance
- manage the potential risks.

Listed below are indicative hazards/risks and suggested control measures. They are by no means exhaustive lists. After checking these, add details of any other identified hazards/risks and additional controls you intend to implement.

Hazards/risks	Control measures	Yes	No	Implementation plan / Additional controls
Biological material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodily fluids (e.g. blood, sweat, saliva) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that personal items such as towels and drink bottles are not shared. • Have sufficient and suitable containment material (bandages etc.) readily available. • Comply with HLS-PR-004: Infection Control and Management of Prescribed Contagious Conditions and Infection Control Guideline. Students with open cuts and abrasions are to be removed from the activity and treated immediately. If bleeding cannot be controlled completely, the participant should not be allowed to return to the activity. All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood should be treated as potentially infectious. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather • Surfaces • Surrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess weather conditions before and during activity (e.g. temperature, storms). • Assess suitability of surrounds. • Check surrounds for loose items, debris and hazards. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment failure • Burns from ropes and wires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use, maintain and store equipment according to manufacturer's specifications. • Conduct equipment check prior to start of session. Particular attention should be given to fastening systems when removable rope systems are used. • Ensure that wet equipment is dried before storing. • Supply all equipment in a clean and serviceable condition. • Provide specific (written and verbal) training in and awareness of safety requirements. • Check equipment before use. • Ensure all safety equipment is in place and in good condition. • Use trained, competent spotters where appropriate. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falling from ropes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have appropriate lead-up activities before students use the ropes course. • Follow progressive and sequential skill development. • Use, maintain and store equipment according to the manufacturer's specifications. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Physical exertion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strains and sprains • Exhaustion and fatigue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have appropriate warm-up and warm-down activities. • Follow progressive and sequential skills development. • Have ice packs available. • Continuously monitor students for signs of fatigue and exhaustion. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special needs • High risk behaviours • Medical conditions • Student numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain parental permission, including relevant medical information. • Where necessary, obtain advice from relevant advisory visiting teachers or specialist teachers. • Ensure there is adequate adult supervision. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When students with medical conditions are involved, ensure that relevant medical/emergency plans and medications are readily available (insulin, Ventolin, EpiPen, etc.) • Refer to Individual education plan/Educational adjustment plan/Behaviour management plan and other student documents. • Ensure that the course is suitable for the participants. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Additional control measures

These would relate to the specific student needs, location and conditions in which you are conducting your activity.

Hazards/Risks	Control Measures

Submitted by:

Date:

List the names of those who were involved in the preparation of this risk assessment.

Approval	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Approved as submitted:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Approved with the following condition(s):
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not approved for the following reason(s):
By:	Designation:
Signed:	Date:
Once approved, activity details should be entered into the <i>School Curriculum Activity Register</i> by administrative staff.	Reference no.

Monitor and review <i>To be completed during and/or after the activity and/or at the completion of the series of activities.</i>	Yes	No
Are the control measures still effective?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have there been any changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are further actions required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details:		

Important links

- HLS-PR-003: First Aid
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr003/>
- HLS-PR-004: Infection Control and Management of Prescribed Contagious Conditions
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr004/>
- HLS-PR-005: Health and Safety Incident Recording and Notification
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr005/>
- SCM-PR-002: School Excursions
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/schools/scmpr002/>
- HLS-PR-013: Developing a Sun Safety Strategy
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr013/>
- Infection Control Guideline
http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/infection_control_guideline.pdf
- International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation
http://www.theuiaa.org/safety_standards.php
- National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme
http://www.qorf.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=353
- Queensland Adventure Activity Standards
http://www.qorf.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=1048
- HRM-PR-010: Working with Children Check – Blue Cards
<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/hr/hrmpr010/>

Glossary and important information

CARABINER: A **carabiner** or **karabiner** (colloquially: *crab*, *snap-link*, *krab*, or *'biner*) is a metal loop with a sprung or screwed gate. The loop part opposite the gate is referred to as the spine. It can quickly and reversibly connect components in safety-critical systems.

COW'S TAILS/CLAWS: A **cowstail** is defined as a short strap, lanyard or sling connected to the main attachment point of a harness. Cowstails are used to connect the harness to the safety line via a back-up device and to the working line via an ascender. Cowstails should be able to withstand any dynamic forces that may be imposed on them in case of a fall. Please refer to the [OHS Code Explanation Guide](#) for more information.

PRUSIK LOOP: A **Prusik** is a friction hitch or knot used to put a loop of cord around a rope. This is applied in climbing, canyoneering, mountaineering, caving, rope rescue, and by arborists.

BELAYING: **Belaying** refers to a variety of techniques used in climbing to exert friction on a climbing rope so that a falling climber does not fall very far.

Further information

For further information on incorporating risk management strategies into curriculum activity planning refer to [HLS-PR-012 Managing Risks in Curriculum Activities](#) and the associated list of [Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment Guidelines](#). (See: <http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hlspr012/index1.html>)

For further support with risk management training and advice, contact trained staff in schools such as Workplace Health and Safety Officers (WHSOs) and Workplace Health and Safety Representatives (WHSRs), and regional staff such as Senior Health and Safety Consultant.