Numinbah Valley Environmental Education Centre

Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment

Activity Details

		CARA Creation Date: 26-Mar-2024	
Activity:	**Climbing and abseiling (artificial surfaces)**		
Activity Scope:	This guideline is provided to support schools in implementing the Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure. The CARA planner must be used for the specific school context in conjunction with this guideline considering additional risks, hazards and controls and including environmental, facility, equipment and student considerations. For activities beyond the scope of this guideline, complete a CARA record using the CARA generic template. **This guideline relates to student participation in climbing and/or abseiling on artificial surfaces with specialised equipment and ropes an activity to support curriculum delivery.** This refers to any activities involving climbing and abseiling on all artificial climbing walls and abseiling towers specifically constructed for this purpose, including those in gymnasiums. It also includes single pitch top rope climbing and abseiling and multi pitch climbing and abseiling activities. Depending on the scope of this activity, other risk assessments may be required when planning. Curriculum activities encompassing more than one CARA guideline (e.g. Challenge low ropes and group activities while Camping) must comply with the requirements of all CARA guidelines appropriate to the activity. Schools should consider conducting this activity at a Department of Education Outdoor and Environmental Education Centre (O&EEC) and consult with O&EEC centre staff for risk assessment requirements. For activities conducted at a non-Department of Education venue, and/or when engaging external expertise, request written risk assessment advice and attach it to this CARA record. For activities conducted off-site, schools must comply with the School excursions and International school study tours procedure.		
Guidelines:	https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling/CARA/activity-guidelines		
Activity Description:	NVEEC has a climbing pole with a platform at 12 metres. Students climb up the pole using hand and feet holds of bent metal bar. The platform is approximately 2.5m square and has metal flooring and full metal railings all around. Students are belayed from ground level with the attachment point at the top of the pole. Students aim to climb to the platform before being lowered down.		
Inherent Risk Level:	High		
Inherent Risk Level Description:	Single pitch climbing, top rope climbing, but not lead climbing. Refer to Glossary for further information.		
Start Date:	Monday, 13 May, 2024	End Date:	Monday, 28 April, 2025
On School Grounds:	Yes	Is parental permission required for this activity?	Yes

Activity Requirements

Reference to Australian Adventure Activity Standard and Abseiling and Climbing Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide is required when planning this activity.	

Permission/permits are required to be obtained from land managers (e.g. local councils or private landholders), if applicable.

Assessment and management of risks associated with working at heights must occur.

Inspection and maintenance of the course must comply with AS2316.2.2:2016 Artificial climbing structures and challenge courses Flying foxes and challenge ropes courses – Operation requirements.

Inspection and maintenance of the artificial climbing structure must comply with AS2316.1-2009 Artificial climbing structures and challenge courses - Fixed and mobile artificial climbing and abseiling walls.

Routine visual checks to be carried out by a competent person before each use of the artificial surface to ensure there is no obvious damage; the site is safe and; the integrity of the safety systems.

Operational inspection to be carried out by a competent person every 3 months, or as indicated in the manufacturer's instruction to confirm no damage or degradation.

Periodic inspection to be carried out at least once every year by an independent certified inspection body (e.g. registered builder of artificial climbing structures) and to include routine visual check; operational inspection; assessment of worn components; and where the inspector deems necessary dismantling of parts; excavation to reveal condition of items underground and/or routine proof testing.

Record and/or certification of inspection of artificial surfaces must be made available to participating schools.

Students

Schools must consider age, maturity and skill level of students when planning curriculum activities. Adjustments are required for students with disability to support access and participation in the curriculum. Consult with the parents/carers of students with disability, or when appropriate the student, to ensure risks related to their child's participation in the activity are identified and managed.

Schools must consult current student medical information and/or health plans in accordance with the Managing students' health support needs at school procedure. Record information about any student condition (e.g. physical or medical) that may inhibit safe engagement in the activity and include specific support measures within emergency procedures.

Emergency and first-aid

Emergency plans and injury management procedures must be established for foreseeable incidents (e.g. medical emergency, equipment failure, thunderstorm, provision of first aid).

Adult supervisors must have:

- emergency contact details of all participants;
- a medical alert list and a process for administering student medication;
- communication equipment suitable to conditions (e.g. two-way radio, mobile phone) and a process for obtaining external assistance and/or receiving emergency advice. Note that battery life can be impacted by weather conditions;
- recovery/rescue equipment suitable to the location;
- an appointed emergency contact (e.g. the Principal) who is provided with a route card listing activity details (outline of the route to be followed, the number and names of the party, the estimated time of departure/arrival;
- emergency shelter/protection locations and alternative routes that consider foreseeable emergencies (e.g. injury, bushfire, thunderstorm, extreme temperature, tides).

Safety procedures must be determined for the location (e.g. safe use of equipment, location of first aid support and equipment).

Access is required to First aid equipment and consumables suitable for foreseeable incidents.

An adult with current emergency qualifications is required to be quickly accessible to the activity area. Emergency qualifications include:

- HLTAID009 Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR);

• HLTAID010 Provide basic emergency life support; • HLTAID011 Provide first aid; • or equivalent competencies. **Induction and instruction** Induction is required for all adult supervisors on emergency procedures (e.g. equipment failure) and safety procedures (e.g. safe use of equipment). If the activity is conducted at an off-site facility, induction is to be informed by advice provided in consultation with expertise at the venue. Instruction is required for students and adult supervisors on correct techniques (e.g. abseiling/rappelling and climbing techniques and methods, safe use of equipment). **Consent** Parent consent is required for all activities conducted off-site. Parent consent is strongly recommended for high risk activities conducted on-site. Parent consent is required for extreme risk activities.	
The activity requirements have been met and any additional requirements for the activity are included below or attached.	☑

Risk Management Details

Supervision	
For activities with students with a medical condition or disability that may impact on safety during the activity, consultation with parents is required prior to allocating supervision to determine the impact of students' medical condition or disability on safety during the activity.	☐
At least two adult supervisors, one of whom is a registered teacher must be present. In certain situations, there may need to be smaller or larger numbers of participants per adult supervisors.	☐
The number of adult supervisors required to fulfil emergency and supervision roles must consider the nature of the nature of the climbing/abseiling elements; and belay system (top managed, bottom managed or autobelay); students' ages; abilities and specialised learning, access and/or health needs. The Abseiling and Climbing Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide should be consulted for supervision ratios.	☑
Due to the risk associated with falls from height, the safe conduct of these activities requires the use of spotters in order to protect the participant's upper body and head from heavy contact with the ground. Spotters are required when the feet of the participant are up to 1.8m above the ground (e.g. lead climbing activities before first clip) [AS 2316.1-2009].	☐
Before the activity, all adult supervisors: • must be familiar with the contents of the CARA record • must inspect the intended location in order to identify variable risks, hazards and potential dangers • if artificial climbing occurs outdoors, weather conditions must be assessed prior to undertaking the activity.	☐
During the activity, all adult supervisors: • must be readily identifiable • must closely monitor students with health support needs • must closely monitor all students, removing participants for the safety of the group or individuals, if applicable • must comply with control measures from the CARA record and adapt as hazards arise.	☐
Supervision requirements determined as part of booking process. Visiting school to identify and provide additional supervision for identified students as required.	

Supervisor Qualifications	
All adult supervisors must comply with the Working with Children Authority - Blue Cards procedure and be able to identify, and respond to, risks or hazards that may emerge during the activity.	☑
A registered teacher must be appointed to maintain overall responsibility for the activity.	☑
At least one adult supervisor is required to be:	

A registered teacher with competence (knowledge and skills) and experience in climbing and abseiling, with statements of attainment which must include the endorsements of climbing and abseiling activities from the Sport, Fitness and Recreation Training Package or similar. Refer to the competencies outlined in the Abseiling and Climbing Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide for guidance.	☑
OR	
An adult supervisor, working under the direct supervision of a registered teacher, with competence (knowledge and skills) and experience in climbing and abseiling and with Certificate III in Outdoor Leadership or Certificate III in Sport and Recreation, similar or higher (e.g. statements of attainment which must include the endorsements of climbing and abseiling). Refer to the competencies outlined in the Abseiling and Climbing Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide for guidance.	☑

Facilities and Equipment	
Location must be suitable for the activity being undertaken. Undertake a reconnaissance of new or infrequently used locations to ascertain suitability.	☑
Vehicle access must be available at all times.	☐
Inspection of staging and climbing areas must occur immediately prior to the activity.	☐
All facilities, structures (e.g. wall fixtures) and equipment (e.g. ropes, harnesses, slings, carabiners and chocks) used must be manufactured specifically for rock climbing/abseiling and must comply with the Australian Standards AS 2316.1—2009 for use and maintenance and International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation specifications.	☑
All equipment (e.g. ropes, harnesses, slings, carabiners and chocks) manufactured specifically for rock climbing/abseiling and must comply with the Australian Standards AS 2316.1—2009 for use and maintenance and International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation specifications.	☐
Equipment must be sized to match the ability and strength of students.	☐
All equipment must be used in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.	☐
A retirement schedule must be developed to replace equipment by manufacturers' nominated expiry date or when significant wear causes a hazard.	☐
Establish and employ a process for checking for damage for all equipment used in the activity.	☑
A log of equipment use, maintenance and inspection for each course must be kept and made available to participating schools upon request.	☐

Equipment listed below must be manufactured for use in the context of the activity and meet the relevant EN, UIAA/CE or Australian Standard: • accessory cord • artificial fixed anchors used in artificial climbing or abseiling structures • ascending devices • belay devices appropriate to the activity and location • carabiners or other connectors • descending devices • dynamic rope • harnesses connected by a safety line (rope or tape) to an appropriate anchor point or belay where exposure to a fall exists • helmets • lanyards • pulleys • slings • static rope • any other equipment that is part of the safety system used.	
Abseiling/rappelling rope long enough for the descent and a top-rope safety rope used in addition to the abseiling/rappelling rope.	☐
Harnesses, helmets, ropes and lanyards must be provided for all participants in line with the following standards and practices: • Harnesses, helmets, ropes and lanyards that meet UIAA safety standards, EN358, EN361, EN813, EN12277, AS/NZS1891.4 or equivalent • harnesses must be worn at all times and fitted correctly when on course, and connected by a safety line to an appropriate anchor point or belay • helmets that meet UIAA or EN12492 standards must be correctly fitted and secured for the duration of the activity • the belay system or lanyard arrangement is appropriate for the expected fall factor of a climber to minimise risk of strangulation.	☑
Appropriate vertical rescue equipment suitable for unassisted abseil, and/or haul and lower rescue techniques must be readily accessible including, but not limited to: • ascending devices • belay device • connectors • knife • pair of pliers or multi grips • pulleys • prusik loops • webbing tape • alloy or steel carabiners • rope long enough for the longest pitch • safety harnesses • slings.	☑
Personal equipment must be provided for all participants including (but not limited to): • helmets correct size and fit and appropriate for protection from falling objects • harnesses must be worn at all times and fitted correctly • clothing appropriate for the activity and weather conditions • firmly fitting, enclosed non-slip footwear appropriate to the terrain • access to drinking water.	☐

Consider using backpacks to carry equipment and edge protectors to protect ropes from abrasion damage.	☐
Matting/soft fall of sufficient density to absorb body impact on the floor must be at the base of the climbing wall in accordance with AS2316.1-2009.	☐
Base of climbs/abseils must be cleared of potential hazards.	☐
See NVEEC Pole Climb SOP for further details.	

Hazards and Control Measures	
Further to those listed, include any additional hazards and control measures considering the local context of the activity.	
Environmental conditions - weather, surfaces, surrounds	
The school's sun safety strategy must be followed if participating outside.	☐
Follow the Managing excessive heat in schools guidelines when participating in very hot or extreme heat conditions.	☐
Monitor participants for cold related illness (e.g. hypothermia) in cold weather conditions.	☐
Ensure drink breaks occur regularly. Make water available for individual participants between drink breaks.	☐
Heights - falling from height	
Assess and manage risks associated with working at heights.	☑
Faulty or dangerous equipment	
Remove any equipment from the activity area that poses a risk to participants.	☐
Ensure all safety equipment is in place and in good condition.	☑
Injury	
Students aware of the location of emergency and first-aid equipment.	☐
Physical exertion - exhaustion and fatigue	
Monitor students for signs of fear, hesitancy, loss of balance, fatigue, disorientation and/or exhaustion.	☐
Student issues	
Conduct appropriate lead-up activities (e.g. trust, cooperation, communication).	☐
Provide suitable options to allow 'challenge by choice'.	☐

Provide scaffolded experiences to build participant skill level, knowledge and experience.	☐
Adopt a system of signals to clearly communicate the need for assistance if in difficulty.	☐
Guide students through an activity or provide a demonstration prior to undertaking the activity.	☐
Remove accessories (e.g. jewellery) before participating.	☐
Ensure fingernails and hair do not pose a hazard.	☐
Implement procedures (e.g. buddy system, roll marking mechanisms) to account for all participants.	☐
Visibility	
Have students wear easily identifiable clothing (e.g. high visibility rash vest).	☐
Ensure staff can easily recognise those students with health support needs and are familiar with their needs.	☐
Glossary **Abseiling**: descending vertical or near vertical natural surfaces or artificial surfaces using ropes and descending friction devices to manage the descent. It is also known as rappelling. **Climbing**: ascending, traversing or descending vertical or near vertical natural surfaces or artificial surfaces. (Also see Rock climbing). **Lead climbing**: where the climber ascends a pitch while periodically attaching their rope to fixed or removable protection. **Multi-pitch**: a section of a natural surface or artificial surface that to ascend, traverse or descend, progress is made by using more than one pitch and establishing belay systems mid route. **Rock Climbing**: ascending, traversing or descending vertical or near vertical natural surfaces. At times also used to describe climbing on artificial surfaces. (Also see Climbing.) **Single-pitch**: a section of a natural surface or artificial surface that requires no greater than one length of rope to ascend, traverse or descend. **Top rope climbing**: climbing where the belay system has its anchor or anchor system at the top of the pitch and uses either a top belay or bottom belay.	
Additional links Sport Climbing Australia Australian Climbing Association Queensland	
Entanglement on Platform- Students are kept on a short rope on the platform to minimise risk of entanglement. If Entanglement occurs (ie student walks around the pole before descending) 1. Talk student through untangling 2. NVEEC staff performs rescue as per guidelines Ladder Slipping- Students access first rung on pole using a ladder. Ladder is secured to the pole at the top, but has a small amount of movement. Student stuck on the climb- NVEEC staff performs rescue as per guidelines.	

Attachments
NVEEC - SOP Pole Climb v24.docx

Approval Details

Approval Status: Approved			
Approval Officer Name:	**Brennan, Kalindi**	Approval Date:	**13-May-2024**

Planning Considerations

Which students will be involved?

- Consider the number of students, size of student groups and students' capabilities e.g. age, experience, competence, fitness, maturity.
- Consider any individual student needs e.g. personalised learning, support provisions (including behaviour support plans), health management (including health plans and prescribed medication requirements).

Where will the students be?

- Consider the location of the activity e.g. remote/easily accessible, public /private, school/classroom/workshop/other.
- Is the number of students appropriate for the available space?
- If outdoors – sunsafe strategies are implemented; weather and environmental conditions are assessed before and during activity (e.g. temperature, storms, water currents, tides); and strategies to reduce the likelihood of viruses, allergies and skin infections caused by insects (e.g. ticks, mosquitoes, spiders) and other animals are applied.
- The site is checked for hazards (e.g. poisonous plants, dangerous animals, uneven terrain, barbed wire,) and necessary controls implemented.
- Activities are appropriately situated in relation to buildings, pedestrians, members of the public, vehicles and other activities e.g. designated areas for activity, spectators and vehicles are established.

What will the students be doing?

- Consider the nature and duration of the activity i.e. need for drinking water, food, rest, appropriate clothing, warm-up and warm-down.
- Instruction in rules and pre-requisite skills is provided.
- Student skills are developed in a progressive and sequential manner.
- First aid and emergency medical treatment provisions are appropriate for the type of activity and location e.g. first aid kit, first aid trained personnel, Ventolin®, Epipen®, and students' personal prescribed medications as required in health plans are available.
- Emergency response strategies are in place e.g. communication plans (e.g. mobile phone, walkie talkie), safety induction, evacuation plans.
- Hair, clothing, footwear and jewellery are worn in a manner that is appropriate and safe for the activity.
- Personal items, e.g. drink bottles, towels and mouthguards, will not be shared between students.

What will the students be using?

- Instruction in safety procedures and safe handling of equipment is provided.
- Equipment is suitable for the activity, properly maintained, appropriately used and complies with the relevant safety standard.
- Relevant department procedures and guidelines are adhered to for the use of equipment and work processes.

Who will be leading the activity?

- A registered teacher has overall responsibility for the activity.
- Sufficient adult supervision is in place to manage the activity safely (including in emergency situations).
- The activity leader has the competence (knowledge and skills) to plan, induct, instruct and manage the activity safely for students and others.
- There are sufficient adults present with current First Aid qualifications (including CPR) or ready access to qualified first aid personnel.
- Blue Card requirements are adhered to for leaders/volunteers.

☑ I have incorporated the above factors when planning my risk management strategies for this activity.

☑ Additional activity-specific requirements for students with specialised learning needs are provided in the Other Details box below.

Supervision requirements determined as part of booking process.
Visiting school to identify and provide additional supervision for identified students as required.

Monitor and Review

Review annually, as new risks are identified or post-incident.