# Cardiff University Students’ Union Activity Risk Assessment

Please read the guidance notes, or visit a member of the Activities staff team, for assistance to complete. Useful guidance can also be found from your relevant National Governing Body.

THIS IS A LIVE DOCUMENT THAT NEEDS REGULARLY REVIEWING AND UPDATING.

1. **General Information:**

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| Club / Society: | Cardiff University Mountaineering Club | | |
| Name of most recent assessor / reviewer: | Rebecca Carman | Date of most recent review: | 08/09/2024 |
| Committee position of most recent assessor / reviewer: | Secretary | Date of original assessment: | 08/09/2024 |

1. **Description of Activity:**

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| **What is the activity?** Attach any routes and maps if applicable.  Indoor climbing that includes top rope, lead, bouldering and use of auto belays. The Club runs weekly minibuses to Boulders Newport Road (for top rope, lead, bouldering and auto belays, and Flashpoint (for bouldering and auto belays). The club occasionally visits Boulders Culverhouse Cross, in the past this has been used to host competitions for Club members but may be used for other reason such as hosting competitions with participants from other universities and club training sessions.  Bouldering involves climbing without ropes up to a height of 4m with safety mats underneath the wall.  For top roping a rope is already set up on the wall by the climbing gym, indoor walls are typically up to 15m tall.  Lead climbing involves a clipping a rope into quickdraws as you climb up the wall.  Auto belays are mechanical devices used to provide a controlled and safe descent for climbers without the use of a second person belaying.  Rubber matting is used under rope climbing areas to reduce the risk of injury during a ground fall.  For lead climbing the Club supplies ropes to members who do not own their own. The Club also provides members with climbing shoes and harness to those who require them. Both lead climbing and top roping require a second person to belay the climber to control any falls, lower them to the ground and in the case of lead climbing provide slack to the climber. When attending club sessions, if the belayer is not experienced then ‘ghost roping’ and ‘tailing’ are techniques to be used by a mentor to ensure the safety of the climber until the belayer meets the safety and experience requirements set by the committee to belay without a mentor. Tailing involves having the mentor hold the dead rope at the same time as the belayer to prevent large falls. Ghost roping is used when a climber/belay are learning to lead climb/belay and involves connecting the climbing to both a top rope that the mentor belays on and a lead rope which the other learner will use. This takes away the risks associated with lead climbing whilst allowing the climber and belayer to learn the techniques and skills required.  Any mentors who are teaching novice climbers will follow a session plan created by qualified committee members. Novice rope climbers will not be able to climb during club sessions without a mentor until they meet the safety and experience requirements set out by the qualified committee members.  **Location / address of the activities:**  Boulders Newport Road  St Catherines Park  Pengam Road  CF24 2RZ  Boulders Culverhouse Cross  Valegate Retail Park  Culverhouse Cross  CF56EH  Flashpoint Cardiff  Freemans Parc  236 Penarth Road  CF11 8EQ  Other indoor climbing venues may be used if the Club is unable to do outside climbing whilst on trips or if the Club participates in a competition such as but not limited to BUCS, NULSCC and competitions hosted by other Universities.  **Approximately how many people are involved?**  30 people  A 17-seater minibus will be used for the Tuesday and Thursday sessions to transport members, other members are free to make their own way to the climbing gym.  For the GIAGs a 17-seater and 9-seater minibus will be used to transport participants, mentors may make their own way to the climbing gym.  **Approximate duration of the activities:**  18:00 to 21:30, approximately 3 hours 30 minutes. This time includes estimated driving time to the climbing walls. |

1. **Hazard Assessment:**

Please continue this assessment for as many pages as required.

If your National Governing Body or managed facility provider have their own Risk Assessment, please attach and reference it within your assessment. Ensure that you act on any control measures that require implementation as a result of this assessment.

A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause harm, for example, a hole in the playing surface.

A hazardous event takes place when someone or something interacts with the hazard. Every hazardous event has a likelihood and a consequence.

Likelihood is a measure of the chance that a hazardous event will occur.

The consequence / severity is the most likely outcome should the hazardous event occur.

Risk is a combination of the likelihood of a hazardous event occurring, with the consequence / severity of the event.

Use the scales below (1-3) to complete the risk matrix.

*Areas for consideration (non-exhaustive list):*

* *Activity that has the potential to cause injury to those participating.*
* *Different levels of ability.*
* *The safe use of equipment required to do activity.*
* *Facilities / location where the activity takes place on/in/at, for example, surfaces, fixtures and fittings.*
* *Environmental factors that would impact the activity, for example, lighting and temperatures.*
* *Risk to both participants and non-participants from each other’s interaction.*
* *Appropriate leadership and information distribution / collecting, for example, participants brief and medical details.*
* *Transport / getting to and from the activity.*

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| **LIKELIHOOD** | **CONSEQUENCE / SEVERITY** |
| **1** = unlikely the event will happen, although conceivable. | **1** = unlikely for an injury to occur, although conceivable, and minor if so. For example, minor cut / graze. |
| **2** = the event could occur sometimes and is fairly likely. | **2** = something more than a ‘scratch’ or ‘bruised ego’. A ‘three day’ injury, requiring further medical assistance. For example, cuts needing stitches. |
| **3** = it is likely the event would occur quite easily / regularly. | **3** = a major injury. For example, broken bones, loss of consciousness, loss of limbs, death. |

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| **INJURY**  What type of injury / damage can occur? | **HAZARD**  What is the hazard that can cause the injury? For example, activity, equipment, procedure, location, environment, participants. | **EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES**  What measures are currently in place to reduce the risk of injury? | **LIKELIHOOD** of injury, taking account of existing control measures  (use scale 1-3). | **SEVERITY** of injury, taking account of existing control measures (use scale 1-3). | **RISK**  = Likelihood X Severity. |
| Traffic collision | Not following the Highway Code and Road Traffic Act 1988 while driving | All drivers must have passed the necessary driving tests that are provided SU Transport | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Climbing under the influence of alcohol | Drinking alcohol before competing in any sport activity impairs the participants ability to safely complete the activity | Ensure that all members do not drink alcohol before any sport activity | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Spread of sickness | Attending group activity while sick and can infect other members and cause them to also become sick | Encourage any member who is showing signs of sickness to stay away from activity until signs have gone | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Slipping or tripping | Sprains, bruising, cuts | Ensure that members are aware of any potential hazards, such as uneven flooring and wet patches (if seen). Ensure members are wearing appropriate clothing for the activity (e.g. closed toe shoes). | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Climber falling because of belayer error | Rope climbing  Broken limbs, sprains, bruises, dislocations, loss of consciousness, shock, death | A mentor will tail or use a ghost rope when the belayer is a novice. Climbers are encouraged to ‘buddy check’ before each climb to ensure belayer has set up equipment correctly. | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Climber falling because of personal equipment failure | Rope climbing  Broken limbs, sprains, bruises, dislocations, loss of consciousness, shock, death | Regular inspection of club kit to be carried out by instructors, the elected Gear Secretary and other experienced committee members. Any faulty or expired equipment will be removed immediately from the kit store. Club members should be regularly inspecting any personal equipment for damage and should avoid using equipment past its expiration date. | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Climber falling because of personal knot failure | Rope climbing  Broken limbs, sprains, bruises, dislocations, loss of consciousness, shock, death | Climbers are encouraged to ‘buddy check’ before each climb to ensure that all knots have been tied correctly. In order to be allowed to rope climb without a mentor during club sessions participants must show that they can confidently and correctly tie the knots used for rope climbing, including attaching them to the correct part of their harness. | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Climber falling because of failure of belayers equipment | Rope climbing  Broken limbs, sprains, bruises, dislocations, loss of consciousness, shock, death | Regular inspection of club kit to be carried out by instructors, the elected Gear Secretary and other experienced committee members. Any faulty or expired equipment will be removed immediately from the kit store. Club members should be regularly inspecting any personal equipment for damage and should avoid using equipment past its expiration date. | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Climber injured because of being lowered off too quickly | Rope climbing  Broken limbs, sprains, bruises, dislocations, shock | Novice belayers will be show how to safely lower a climber by a mentor. Novice belayers will have a mentor tailing the dead rope until they meet the safety and experience requirements of committee. | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Lead climber injured due to failure to clip protection point | Lead climbing  Broken limbs, sprains, bruising, dislocations, shock | Novice lead climbers will learn using a ghost rope that is controlled by a mentor, this takes away the risk of falling whilst learning. Novice climbers will be taught the best clipping positions whilst climbing to reduce the distance of falling. Members are encouraged to call out dangerous clipping scenarios. | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Lead climber injured due to failure to clip first or second protection point | Lead climbing  Broken limbs, sprains, bruises, dislocations, loss of consciousness, shock, death | Belayers will spot the climber up until they clip the first bolt. Novice climbers will be taught the best clipping positions whilst climbing to reduce the distance of falling. | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Lead climber falling because rope is too short and slips through belay device | Lead climbing  Broken limbs, sprains, bruises, dislocations, loss of consciousness, shock, death | Always checking with the centre the length of rope required for each wall. Tying a safety knot in the end of the dead rope to ensure it does not slip through the belay device. | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Inversion occurs when falling | Rope climbing  Broken limbs, bruising, sprains, dislocations, loss of consciousness, shock | Climbers are encouraged to ‘buddy check’ before each climb to ensure that the climber is correctly tied in (i.e. tied into both loops of belay point). Novice lead climbers will be taught how inversion can occur and how to reduce the chance of it occurring. | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Stuck climber | Rope climbing  Stress/anxiety | Participants correctly briefed on the activity beforehand, staff members at the climbing to deal with and resolve incidents as they occur. | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Belayer or spectator injured by falling climber | Broken limbs, sprains, bruising, loss of consciousness, dislocations, shock. | Ensure belayers know where to stand and to be anchored to the ground if necessary whilst belayer to reduce the risk of collision. Ensure spectators are not standing in the ‘drop zone’ | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Climber stranded because of jammed belay device | Rope climbing  Stress/anxiety of both climber and belayer.  Other injuries (bruising, shock, sprains) may occur depending on the circumstances of the jam | Ensure long hair is tied back, tuck in hoodie strings, remove all jewellery before climbing, keep fingers a safe distance away from belay device, all to ensure they do not get caught when belaying. Ensure rope is running through belay device correctly before the climber starts climbing | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Entanglement or entrapment in ropes | Rope climbing  Friction burns, stress, anxiety | Clothing to protect body from fiction burns, ensure belays know not to step on any rope. Ensure people do not twist the rope around themselves. Excessively loose clothing should be avoided. Ensure climber flake out the rope at the start of session and as necessary throughout/ | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Climber falling due to hold breaking or spinning | Sprains, bruises | During rope climbing the rope and belayer should catch the fall. When bouldering, ensure that climbers know the correct way to land when taking an unexpected fall. Climbers to repot broken or spinning holds to the climbing centre. There are usually warning signs at the bottom of each rope climb warning about spinning holds. | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Falling awkwardly in bouldering areas | Bouldering  Broken limbs, dislocations, sprains, bruising | Crash mats underneath all climbs, teaching of how to fall safely, encourage climbers to down climb after finishing a clilmb | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Failure to clip into auto belay system correctly | Using auto belays  Broken limbs, sprains, bruises, dislocations, loss of consciousness, shock, death | Teach climbers how to correctly clip into auto belays. Encourage climbers to check they are clipped into the device correctly by ‘clicking’ the carabiner and ensuring the cord is retracting properly. | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Failure of auto belay system | Using auto belays  Broken limbs, sprains, bruises, dislocations, loss of consciousness, shock, death | Encourage climbers to check that the system works correctly before each climb by pulling on the cord and ensuring it retracts correctly. Climbing wall staff to regularly check the system and replace as needed. | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Wearing rings whilst climbing | Degloving of finger skin | No climber wearing rings will be allowed to climb without removing all rings | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Rope slips through belayers hands during a catch of a falling climber | Rope climbing  Shock, anxiety  Broken limbs, bruising dislocations, sprains for climber  Rope burn on palms and fingers for belayer. | Ensure that the belayer has been taught how to correctly catch a climber. Ensure that the belayers attention remains on the climber for the entirety of their climb | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Rope climber and belayer collide following a fall from a low height | Rope climbing  Bruising, sprains, concussion, dislocations | Climbers and belayers will be taught the importance of climbing with someone of a similar weight, and should understand the dangers of falling low down. Belayers should wear appropriate shoes to prevent foot injury if they hit the wall during a catch. | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Injury due to overexertion without a proper warm up or strengthening plan, climbing injuries for these reasons notably occur to fingers, wrists and shoulders | Temporary muscle or joint pain when doing activity, ligament, muscle or tendon damage | Participants should ensure that they are suitably warmed up before attempting technical or strenuous climbs. Training guidence can be provided by the Training and Competition Secretary. Participants should stop any activity which causes them pain and seek medical advice. | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Bleeding from a graze or cut, bleeding due to climbing can commonly occur on fingers or hands | Spread of disease or illness | Participants should use a plaster, bandage or climbing tape to prevent the spread of blood to any climbing surface. Participants should tape any skin that is close to bleeding before it happens. | 2 | 2 | 4 |

**ADD MORE ROWS IF REQUIRED, THIS SPACE IS NOT LIMITING.**

1. **Risk Evaluation:**

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| Risk factor from assessment matrix | Level of risk |
| 1 - 2 | **LOW RISK:** no further control measures should be required at this time but ensure any in place are maintained and reviewed. |
| 3 - 4 | **MEDIUM RISK:** ensure that the suitable control measures are in place as described in the hazard assessment. You must continuously consider and implement additional control measures where possible. Do not do the activity if you are uncomfortable with the equipment, guidance and support available. |
| 6 - 9 | **HIGH RISK: DO NOT DO ACTIVITY** until risk has been considered, reduced and additional control measures have been enforced. You must identify the additional, necessary control measures and re-evaluate the activity to understand if it is appropriate. Speak to the Activities department for advice. |

1. **Supervision / Safety of the Activity**

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| **What supervision is required for the activity?** Coach / leader registration via the student portal is to be completed for all coaches and activity leaders, including volunteers and current students.  Mentors will be used to teach novice climbers, these are people who are experienced climbers. Mentors nominate themselves for this position, experienced committee members then decide whether they have the correct knowledge and skills to teach based on the guidelines that have been previously decided upon. Qualification is not required to be a mentor however it is advised.  **What appropriate ratio of coach / leader to student is required for the activity?**  Bouldering – 1:6  Lead climbing - 1:2  Top rope climbing - 1:2  Members who work as instructors at Boulders, having done CWI/RCI training and are allowed to mentor in a 1:8 ratio.  **What First Aid provision is required?** If not required within the student group, how / where can you access this?You can source assistance with First Aid training from the Activities department if it is identified that provision is needed.  First Aid will be provided by staff members at the climbing gym. Staff members will be at the reception for the gym and often spread throughout the gym. The climbing gym will have a suitable first aid kit.  **What safety equipment do you need to provide for this activity to go ahead?**  Harnesses, belay devices, ropes, climbing shoes   * Ensure that you and your members are aware of the Cardiff University Students’ Union Emergency Procedures – these can be found on ‘committee resources’ on cardiffstudents.com. * **All incidents, accidents and near misses** are required to be reported / recorded to the Activities department as soon as possible after the event. |

1. **IMPLEMENT THE CONTROL MEASURES** detailed in this assessment and communicate the findings to members via Operating Procedures. A template can be found on ‘committee resources’ on cardiffstudents.com.

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| **What do you need to tell your members / the participants following this assessment? Where can they find your Operating Procedures?**  Make them aware of where to find the risk assessment (web page), this is also where the operating procedure will be.  Ensure that members are aware of the risks associated with climbing. |

1. **Review**

All safety-related documents must be reviewed each year by incoming committees and activity leaders. They also need reviewing in the event of a serious accident / incident or should any hazards / control measures change.

Each time this document is reviewed or updated, please complete and sign the below. Within the document, please note any additions with the date it was updated in brackets.

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| **NAME** | **COMMITTEE POSITION** | **REVIEW DATE** |
| Rebecca Carman | Secretary | 08/09/2024 |
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1. **Activities Department Contacts for Student Groups**

Athletic Union – [AthleticUnion@cardiff.ac.uk](about:blank)

Guild of Societies – [Societies@cardiff.ac.uk](about:blank)

Volunteering – [Volunteering@cardiff.ac.uk](about:blank)

1. **Enjoy your activity!**