

# High Ropes



**Reviewed By**

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## Activity Scope

This risk assessment refers to High Rope & High Elements conducted under the direct supervision of a qualified YMCA Instructor. All information supplied is based on best practice for the relevant activity.

## Risk Assessment

In assessing the level of risk, considerations such as the likelihood of an incident happening in combination with the seriousness of a consequence are used to gauge the overall risk level for an activity. The matrix below has been used as a guide to assist with developing the risk assessment:

RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX		CONSEQUENCES				
		Minor – first aid treatment only.	Significant – treatment required by a medical professional.	Substantial – overnight hospitalisation, multiple medical treatments, short-term rehabilitation.	Major –permanent impairment or loss, long term rehabilitation.	Disaster – fatality, multiple Major consequences.
LIKELIHOOD	Almost Certain – expected to occur in most circumstances.	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME	EXTREME
	Likely – probably occur in many circumstances.	MODERATE	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME
	Possible – might occur in some circumstances.	MODERATE	MODERATE	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME
	Unlikely – could occur in unusual circumstances.	LOW	MODERATE	MODERATE	HIGH	HIGH
	Rare – possible only in exceptional circumstances.	LOW	LOW	MODERATE	MODERATE	MODERATE

# Risk Level for High Ropes

The risk levels for this activity have been measured using the risk assessment matrix . The highest individual risk assessment level associated with the activity determines the overall risk level given.

	Initial risk level (before controls)	Action required/approval
<b>High</b>	Likely chance of a substantial consequences and injury requiring hospitalisation and rehabilitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Risk level not acceptable - Control measures must be implemented to reduce risk to acceptable level.</li> <li>✓ Documented Safe Operating Procedures required for each high ropes activity. To be approved by Camp Manager and WHS Manager.</li> <li>✓ All instructors must be provided with training in SOP prior to taking Activity.</li> <li>✓ Obtaining parental permission is recommended.</li> </ul>

## Hazards and suggested control measures

Listed below are the indicative hazards/risks and the suggested control measures.

Hazards/risks	Control measures
<b>Biological material</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bodily fluids (e.g. blood, sweat, saliva)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants 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 the activity. All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood should be treated as potentially infectious.</li> <li>• Have sufficient and suitable containment material (bandages, etc) available</li> <li>• Ensure that personal items are not shared.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental conditions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High temperature</li> <li>• UV radiation</li> <li>• Storms – high winds, rain, hail, lightning</li> <li>• Surfaces – slips / trips</li> <li>• Surrounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess weather conditions before and during activity (e.g. temperature, storms). Activity not to proceed / cease in the event of storms or high winds.</li> <li>• Instructors and participants for wear hats (when not wearing helmets) and sunscreen.</li> <li>• Instructor to utilise shade wherever possible (eg – during briefings)</li> <li>• Instructor and participants encouraged to bring drink bottles to the activity</li> <li>• Check and assess surrounds for loose items, debris such as fallen tree branches etc, and other hazards.</li> <li>• The location should allow safe access to the staging areas</li> <li>• Visibility and access to be considered before choosing routes</li> <li>• Consider hazards associated with types of fencing material, gates and other infrastructure.</li> <li>• Enclosed study shoes must be worn</li> </ul>

Hazards/risks	Control measures
<p><b>Equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment failure</li> <li>• Burns from ropes and wires</li> <li>• Being struck by swinging participant or equipment</li> <li>• Tangle of equipment</li> <li>• Entrapment of clothing / parts of body</li> <li>• Incorrect set up / use / fit of equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation (UIAA) approved equipment.</li> <li>• Use, maintain and store equipment according to manufacturer’s specifications</li> <li>• Conduct regular equipment checks prior to start of sessions. Particular attention to fastening systems when removable rope systems are used. All equipment to be in a clean and serviceable condition prior to use.</li> <li>• Routine checks for worn or faulty equipment, and adhere to manufacturer’s guidelines for life of equipment</li> <li>• Ensure all safety equipment is in place and in good condition and discard immediately if not suitable</li> <li>• Activity to be only be qualified instructors who are competent in the use of all equipment and who have been instructed in the Safe Operating Procedures. Use of trained, competent spotters</li> <li>• Ensure wet equipment is dried before storing</li> <li>• Provide specific (written and verbal) training to instructors in use of equipment and awareness of safety requirements.</li> <li>• Participants briefed on positioning of hands and use of karabiners / descending device etc.</li> <li>• Set-up performed by qualified person instructor and checked directly prior to commencing the activity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Heights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Falling from ropes / tower</li> <li>• Falling from harness / inverting</li> <li>• Struck by falling objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have appropriate lead-up activities before participants use the ropes course</li> <li>• Follow progressive and sequential skill development</li> <li>• All participant shown how to correctly fit harness. Check of harness by instructor.</li> <li>• Use of sit and chest harness or full harness for activities where inversion is possible – giant swing, flying fox.</li> <li>• All items in pockets etc must be removed before prior to commencing activity. Participants briefed on where to stand during activity. No person beneath instructor when handling equipment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special needs</li> <li>• High risk behaviours</li> <li>• Medical conditions / illness</li> <li>• Participant numbers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain parental permission including relevant medical information</li> <li>• Bried participants on behaviour expectations</li> <li>• When participants with medical conditions are involved, ensure that relevant medical/ emergency plans and medications are readily available (insulin, Ventolin, Epipen, etc)</li> <li>• Refer to individual education plan/Educational adjustment plan/Behaviour management plan and other participant documents. Where necessary, obtain advice from relevant advisory visiting teachers or specialist teachers.</li> <li>• Ensure there is adequate adult supervision</li> <li>• Ensure long hair is tied back before participating in the activity</li> <li>• All forms of jewellery should be removed or protected (e.g. tape) before participating in the activity</li> <li>• Participants who are actively participating in the activity, to be seen by at least one adult at all times</li> <li>• No participant to be forced to participate beyond their readiness – “challenge by choice”</li> </ul>

Hazards/risks	Control measures
<p><b>Physical exertion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strains and sprains</li> <li>• Exhaustion and fatigue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have appropriate warm-up and warm-down activities</li> <li>• Follow progressive and sequential skills development</li> <li>• Have ice packs available</li> <li>• Continuously monitor participants for signs of fatigue and exhaustion</li> <li>• Continuously monitor participants for fear and/ or hesitancy, or loss of balance</li> </ul>

Minimum equipment/facilities
First aid kit suitable for activity
<p>Communication system</p> <p>Electronic and other equipment that can be damaged by water is to be carried in water resistant containers. Instructors are responsible for determining the equipment to be carried by all participants. The following communication equipment should be appropriate for the activity and area of operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Phone-line at location</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> UHF Radio</li> </ul>
Sun Safety equipment (hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, shirt etc)
Appropriate clothing and footwear (no singlets, skirts, short shorts, thongs, crocs etc)
Instructor will inspect the area and ensure its soundness before commencing the activity
Equipment use and maintenance log to be kept or each session
Drinking water (participants should not share drinking containers)
Vehicular access to within a reasonable distance of the activity in case of emergency
Access ladder

## Minimum equipment/facilities

Harness and helmet for all participants in line with the following standards and practises.

- Harnesses and helmets specifically designed for Rope Activities, and compliant with the International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation (UIAA), European Committee for Standardisation standard or equivalent.
- Harnesses to be worn at all times during activity, and to be connected by a safety line (rope or tape) to an appropriate anchor point or belay where exposure to a fall exists
- Harnesses to be retired by manufacturer's nominated expiry date
- Helmets to be of the correct size and fit
- Helmets to be worn and secured throughout any activity session where participants are exposed to typical climbing/abseiling hazards
- Helmets to remain on participants until completion of the activity.

Safety ropes, harnesses, slings and all other safety equipment (karabiners, slings and chocks), manufactured specifically for rock climbing/abseiling, used according to the manufacturer's specifications and accepted abseiling practises and conforming to the Australian Standards and UIAA specifications.

## Minimum equipment/facilities continued...

A suitable equipped rescue pack, including, but not limited to:

- An additional safety rope, equivalent in length to twice the height of the highest element or belay wire or anchor point
- Knife
- Pair of pliers or multi grips
- Two-three steel karabiners
- Cowstails/claws
- Tape (for improvised chest harness)
- 2-3 prusik loops
- 2-3 alloy or steel karabiners
- Belay device
- Pulley
- Safety harness connected by a safety line to an appropriate anchor point or belay

All practises and processes are adopted from the Queensland Adventure Activity Standards

## Minimum supervision

A minimum of 1 qualified YMCA Instructor + 1 Teacher/Group Leader is to be present to run High Ropes.

It is strongly recommended that at least 2 Teachers/ Group Leaders are present to assist with participant behaviour

1 YMCA Instructor per 15 participants (minimum and maximum numbers apply. Alterations to YMCA Instructor : participant ratios must be done in consultation with Camp Management) .

All YMCA staff, contractors and volunteers hold required qualifications /skills sets or other recognised skill sets/ qualifications from another jurisdiction, along with mandatory First Aid/ CPR and QLD Blue Card (working with children check).

Emergency Procedures	Teacher/ Group Leader Responsibilities	Participant Briefing Instructor should cover	Participant Requirements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Effect Rescue as required.</li> <li>2. Conduct First Aid as required.</li> <li>3. Contact Emergency Services via mobile phone.</li> <li>4. Depending on injury: stabilise patient and await ambulance or remove patient to appropriate site to recover.</li> <li>5. In the event of serious injury, suspend activity until incident can be investigated.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform and liaise with Activity Instructor regarding any potential issues with group.</li> <li>• Listen to activity briefings and assist Instructor in procedural aspects of session as required.</li> <li>• Monitor and take charge of behavioural issues if needed and attend to any pre-existing medical conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge by Choice Philosophy</li> <li>• Session Objectives</li> <li>• OH&amp;S Brief</li> <li>• Safety Brief</li> <li>• Equipment Familiarisation</li> <li>• Skills Demonstration and Practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunscreen, insect repellent.</li> <li>• Medication (if relevant)</li> <li>• Water bottle.</li> <li>• Fully enclosed shoes, hat.</li> <li>• Minimum of sleeved shirt that covers midriff when arms are raised.</li> <li>• Shorts/leggings that preferably cover knees (to prevent grazes).</li> <li>• Hair tied back, jewellery removed.</li> </ul>