

# Southern Sandstone Leader's Award - Assessment

## Course Outline

This training and assessment programme is relevant to the Sandstone Outcrops of the Weald of Sussex and Kent, including such venues as Harrisons, Bowles, Stone Farm, High Rocks and the smaller venues listed in the current guide. It DOES NOT cover any other venues, sandstone or otherwise, and does NOT include the chalk climbs mentioned in the Sandstone Guide book.

The award may be accepted by such indoor walls as High Sports, the Adur Centre, Evolution etc, but this is entirely at their discretion. You will normally be asked to produce your pass page, 1<sup>st</sup> aid certificate, up to date logbook and possibly 1<sup>st</sup> aid certificate, public liability insurance and supporting documents such as risk assessments. A phone call to the relevant wall will make this clear, as different venues have different rules. In all cases, you will normally be asked to undergo an induction session as well.

### **IMPORTANT**

THE Southern Sandstone Leader's Award IS NOT A NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY AWARD, although the BMC/MLTE do recognise it as a suitable "site specific" scheme.

It is operated by the Sandstone Award Panel, a group set up in 2008 to take over from the Local Education Authorities that used to administer their own versions of the award. Since 2000, the LEAs have run fewer courses, and eventually they decided they had neither time nor the resources to operate the award. Without the creation of the Sandstone Award Panel, the award would have ceased, leaving the SPA as the only viable option.

The panel is a non-profit making, informal group of volunteers and supported by Plumpton College. The panel members include representatives from:

The Guide Association, Outdoor Education Charities, Commercial Outdoor Education Providers, MIA or higher award holders, Outdoor Professionals involved in the provision of National Governing Body Awards, such as CWA, SPA etc. All have many years experience of running sessions and teaching on Southern Sandstone.

### Prior to Assessment

Candidates must:

1. Register with Plumpton College, pay the fee and print off the log pages/syllabus AND FULLY COMPLETE THEM - INCLUDING THE PERSONAL PROFILE.
2. Have personal experience of climbing on at least 3 Sandstone Outcrops, have climbed at least **30** routes and be confidentially able to climb 4a.
3. You must be familiar with the techniques and equipment suitable for leading groups on the Sandstone crags, and if you have not attended training it is your responsibility to become so. You are advised that experience gained at climbing walls and/or crags elsewhere in the country is not sufficient.
4. You should be interested in teaching and supervising groups on the Sandstone. Before attending assessment, you should have worked on at least **10 half-day sessions with a qualified instructor on Sandstone outcrops.**
5. You must hold a current 1<sup>st</sup> aid award, minimum 16 hours, assessed and provided by an HSE approved trainer.

### On the Day

You will be asked to lead a group of total or near novices for a basic session at the crag.

Prior to the course, you will have discussed with your assessor the following:

1. Who is providing the group (normally instructors bring their own)?
2. How many are in the group? There should be enough people in the group for you to run 2 ropes safely as a minimum. Less than this and the assessment will not be able to continue.
3. Where the equipment is coming from. Normally, equipment is supplied by the candidate or the company organising the assessment. Assessors do not normally provide equipment.

Please come prepared, including a packed lunch, plenty of drink etc. You are responsible for 1<sup>st</sup> aid cover and provision. You must provide personal equipment, e.g. helmet, harness, belay device, krab and rock boots as you will be required to climb a route of 4a standard.

### The proposed programme is as follows:-

Meet at the chosen crag, usually in the car park. Introductions and short discussion to appreciate the needs of participants, Equipment check. Hand in all paperwork.

Instructor takes over the group and runs a "normal" intro session, to include:

Approaching the crag, risk assessment (not written ones!), choosing appropriate routes for age/ability/disability etc

Group briefing, behaviour code, where to sit, helmet free areas, litter, noise, other climbers etc

Briefing and use of non-skilled assistant

Unroped climbing – be this scrambling or bouldering. Includes appropriate briefings, spotting, waiting areas & environmental concerns

Setting up the ropes in a reasonable time, bearing in mind the time the group is left with nothing to do.

Fitting of equipment, giving particular attention to handling of group members, child protection etc

Teaching Belaying, making sure the groups can do it

Attaching to the rope – if clipping in is used, the instructor will be asked to demonstrate tying in at some point, possibly to the assessor after the group has finished

Pre-climb checks

Monitoring the group belaying, the move away from the crag top and the descent

Dealing with any issues with the group, including behavioural, skills, management etc

Clearing away and de-brief, as appropriate.

### When the Group are gone (or with a different instructor under assessment)

The instructor must demonstrate anything that was not seen when working with the group, e.g.:

Setting up more difficult anchors choices, including "Y" hangs with static line

"Bell Ringer" belaying with a Grigri or Italian Hitch

Climb a route of their choice at 4a standard

Review logbook, 1<sup>st</sup> aid certificate and personal reference

Anything else that the assessor feels appropriate, then results given: Pass Defer or Fail and an action plan if defer or fail is given