

Teaching guide: climbing

This resource confirms the core skills and techniques students need to demonstrate if rock climbing is their chosen assessed activity for GCSE Physical Education and Sport (version 1.1 of the specification).

All participating students should visit climbing walls regularly and ideally, be following the National Indoor Climbing Award Scheme (NICAS).

Find out more about the scheme via [the NICAS website](#).

Part 1 - skills (10 marks)

Students need to perform core skills and techniques through a variety of progressive drills. Skills can be demonstrated one at a time, but to gain higher level marks, students should link skills and techniques together to increase the difficulty of their route up the wall.

This will help them to demonstrate an understanding of how and when each skill is most effective. For example, a student working through 'climbing schemes' would be expected to show an understanding of passive, active and progressive toe hooks.

Skills must be shown across multiple climbs; one climb will not be enough.

You can assess students indoor or outdoor, across the following five core strengths.

1. Bottom – top rope climbing, hand finger and foot jams, with 2-3 points of contact
2. Rope work
3. Overhangs/mantle shelves
4. Traversing
5. Abseiling

Part 2 – full context (15 marks)

Students should perform a full climb in either a challenging environment or in a competition, demonstrating a range of skills suited to their route. The difficulty of the climb should be appropriately challenging for the student, who should be aiming to reach an officially recognised climbing grade of HVS 5A/5B.

Inclusion of hand/finger/foot jams has caused some debate because there are limited opportunities to demonstrate this on a wall. We suggest these can be replaced by open crimp, guppy, flagging and rock cover skills. Students won't lose marks for showing these skills instead. For more clarification, visit the [climbing techniques page](#) on timeoutdoors.com