



Climbing Wall Association

Certification Program Policy Manual

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February 2024*

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. THE CWA CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Climbing Wall Association, Inc. (CWA), a non-profit corporation, sponsors multiple certification programs. The purpose of the certification program is to establish a voluntary certification for climbing wall workers and a uniform set of performance standards that can be easily adopted worldwide.

The CWA Certification programs have a **mission** to increase the professionalism, knowledge, and experience of climbing wall workers. These goals are accomplished by:

- Creating and maintaining quality training programs and resources.
- Sharing industry information, trends, and progress.
- Improving risk management and operational practices.

These actions underpin the sport of climbing by increasing professionalism and encouraging an attitude of personal responsibility in our industry.

Certification is a **voluntary process of training and evaluation** that credits an individual with conforming to a prescribed set of certification standards that existed at the time of the evaluation or examination.

B. CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Certification refers to the confirmation of certain characteristics and/or skills of a person at a particular time. This confirmation is provided or confirmed by participation in educational preparation, review, and assessment. One of the most common types of certifications is **professional certification**, where a person is certified as able to competently conduct a job or task, usually by passing an examination.

The **focus** of the certification programs offered by the CWA is to **assess** the ability of the candidate to:

- Execute key technical skills
- Act with professionalism
- Manage risks
- Improve communication skills
- Develop the instructional skills of program Providers and instructors

See more about the limits and maintenance of certifications further into the document.

TYPES OF CWA CERTIFICATIONS

Certifications can differ within a profession by level or specific area of expertise. The CWA offers the following certification programs:

- Instructor Certification
- Work at Height Certification
- Professional Routesetting Certification

All certified individuals within the CWA certification programs are expected to meet the standards outlined within the Certification Standard for the specific certification. The Certification Standard is in the Appendices of this document.

C. GOVERNANCE

The certification programs are the responsibility of the CWA. Responsibilities include:

- Management and administration of the programs
- Instructional Design
- Certificate Issuance
- Program commercial support
- Managing complaints and audits
- Development and support of the program Provider, Provider Trainer, advisory, and committee groups
- Resource development and maintenance

The CWA Board of Directors establishes and empowers the certification programs and committees. **The CWA** is responsible for safeguarding the

integrity of the certification programs and **reserves the right to confer, deny, temporarily suspend, or permanently withdraw certification status at any time for any reason.**

The CWA certification program's decision to confer, deny, temporarily suspend, or permanently withdraw certification status is in no way intended as a judgment by the CWA on any aspect of the certified candidate's or program Provider's programs or services other than the ability to participate in the certification program.

Standards Advisory Committees

Responsibility for maintenance of the certification standards is delegated to a chartered committee of the CWA. The following committees oversee each of the certification programs:

CWI Certification Standards Committee - Climbing Wall Instructor certification

WAH Certification Standards Committee - Work at Height certification

PRS Certification Standards Committee - Routesetting certification

The program and committees have been established and empowered by the CWA Board of Directors.

Standards Advisory Committee Responsibilities:

The CWA Certification Standards Advisory Committees responsibilities include:

- Develop and maintain standards and alternative qualification pathways.
- Confer, deny, or withdraw certification.
- Set policies and procedures relevant to the governance and operation of the program.
- Support the collective mission of the CWA Certification programs.
- Develop educational materials.
- Evaluate the program periodically.

D. GOALS OF THE CWA CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

The goals common to the certification programs are:

- To increase the level of professionalism in indoor climbing.
- To provide candidates with guidance for further professional development.
- To improve the risk management practices within climbing facilities.
- To review industry trends and equipment development.

Certification candidates are assessed in knowledge, application, and compliance with the certification standards through online learning and in person review.

E. ELIGIBILITY

The certification programs maintain program eligibility requirements and recommendations. Eligibility requirements and recommendations are overseen by the Certification Standards Committee relevant to the certification program. The committees are required to take stakeholders into account when developing, evaluating, or modifying eligibility requirements and recommendations.

Candidates may question eligibility determinations by appealing to the relevant Certification Standards Committee. The appellant must demonstrate to the committee that the eligibility requirements are inappropriate, irrelevant, or unreasonable prerequisites for competence in their professional role to successfully challenge an eligibility decision. The Certification Standards Committee may determine an alternative qualification on a case-by-case basis.

Any person meeting the prerequisites for certification may stand as a candidate for certification. Eligibility is determined based upon review of the prerequisites by self-assessment and/or the CWA Certification Coordinator.

Certification prerequisites are determined by the Level of certification being sought. **See the Certification Standards for each certification program at the end of this document. The Certification Standard document provides specific information for each Level of certification.**

Note: A determination that the candidate is eligible to apply for certification in no way expresses or implies that the candidate will meet the requirements for certification.

F. LIMITS OF THE CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS AND STANDARDS

LIMITS OF CWA CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

The certification programs are voluntary programs for indoor climbing wall workers and are employed as a means of industry self-regulation. Neither the CWA nor certification program personnel have the authority to bar or ban an individual from the practice of his or her chosen profession. The CWA certification programs only have the authority to confer, deny, suspend, or remove certified status within the program.

Limits of the CWA Certification programs:

- Certification is an assessment that an individual has met the specific minimum published certification standards current at the time of the examination.
- The certification standards are maintained and revised periodically by the CWA Certification Standards Committees.
- Given the varied prior experience of the candidates, the varied experience and perspectives of the Providers, the finite time available to complete the course and evaluation, and the nature of the performance standards, it is not possible to guarantee absolute consistency from Provider to Provider, course to course, or assessment decisions from different Providers.

A degree of consistency is the goal of the program, therefore, identical course materials, evaluation instruments, and performance standards are adopted, made available to participants, and applied throughout the respective programs.

A certification candidate's compliance with the standards is assessed through a variety of methods including:

1. Interviews
2. Knowledge of written material
3. Reasonable inference of competency as defined by the assessment tools
4. Direct observation of the candidate's performance of skills and tasks

The certification program Providers and/or program Provider Trainers evaluate the candidates' actual performance with the understanding that if these skills

and tasks are performed adequately, then the candidate has the requisite knowledge, demeanor, skills, and abilities and may be certified. **Compliance with the certification standards must be observed directly.**

LIMITS OF CWA PROGRAM STANDARDS

Within each certification program, the CWA outlines program standards. The Standards for each certification program are found in the Appendices of this document.

The Standards are intended for use by experienced professionals in the climbing industry. Misuse or improper interpretation of the Standards may result in severe injury or death. The CWA reserves the exclusive right to issue or not to issue official interpretations of the Standards. Requests for interpretations must be made in writing to the CWA.

The Certification and Program Standards do not attempt to encompass every policy, procedure or practice that may be implemented in each circumstance. Furthermore, compliance with the Certification and Program Standards does not guarantee that a climbing facility will be a safe workplace or that workers will be free from harm.

CWA disclaims all duty, responsibility, or liability to climbing wall owners, operators, employees, clients, participants, and other parties for any equipment damage, property damage, injury, death, or other loss resulting from any cause, including any cause claimed to be a result of a person's or organization's adherence to, or failure to adhere to, the Certification and Program Standards.

While the Certification and Program Standards provide a framework to assist climbing wall operators in developing a sound Programs, specific ways of implementing these Standards will vary with the mission and purpose of the organization, the facility design, equipment in use, employee experience, training programs and other factors. The Standards do not purport to provide specific solutions to workplace risks and hazards - identifying those risks and hazards and developing appropriate and adequate plans are the responsibility of the employer.

II. CERTIFICATION STANDARDS INTRODUCTION

Certification standards are:

- Performance-based skills such as technical skills and risk management or instructional skills
- Observable attributes such as professionalism, communication, teamwork
- Knowledge such as regulatory and/or policy knowledge

Certification standards will be assessed using an assessment instrument and process designed for each certification. The entire certification curriculum, including all standards, must be reviewed and assessed to certify a candidate.

A. SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

The CWA certification program standards are focused on technical skills, are intended to represent minimum competencies for professionals working in a climbing facility and are designed to be applicable in a wide variety of indoor climbing facilities.

The standards will not and cannot address all types of work, instruction, or operational practices in all facilities.

B. INTENT AND INTERPRETATION OF CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

Certification Standards were designed to help professionals in the indoor climbing industry identify key performance criteria. The criteria in the standards are elements of effective and professional behaviors when working in a climbing facility.

Certification standards are intended to be statements of acceptable practice as defined by experienced professionals and climbing equipment manufacturers.

The Certification Standards can be considered the basis upon which to build an appropriate staff training program suitable for a given facility. In other words, the certification standards may include material not relevant to a particular facility (e.g. auto belay devices or lead climbing) or may omit material outside the scope of climbing activities applicable to a particular facility (e.g. use of exercise equipment or yoga).

Finally, standards must evolve according to a variety of factors including:

- Theory
- Practice in the field
- New and emerging technology
- Experience
- Research
- The regulatory environment
- Public attitudes and expectations

The standards are reviewed regularly and revised periodically by the CWA Certification Standards Committees who are the final authority regarding standards development, application, and interpretation.

C. FORMAT OF THE CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

The certification standards reflect the standards relevant to the program area. The certification standards may be presented by the Provider in an order suitable for the course and the candidates as the Provider sees fit. The current certification standards can be found on the CWA website and in the appendices of this document.

D. COMPLIANCE WITH CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

A candidate for certification must meet all (100%) of the required standards on the assessment instrument to achieve certification.

Certification may be conferred in accordance with the level of demonstrated competency. It should be clear if and how each standard is met.

If a candidate disagrees with the assessment the candidate can appeal to the Provider to request to be re-tested later. See the appeals section later in the policy manual.

E. Continuing Certification

It is the responsibility of a certified candidate to maintain their certification by compliance with the following guidelines:

- Continuing education and professional development
- Maintenance of their profile in the CWA Community Hub
- Regular review of revisions to the Certification Program materials
- Renewal of certification within six months of certification expiry

III. CERTIFICATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The certification program offered by the CWA is conducted by members of the indoor climbing community in coordination with the CWA. The following is a review of the various certification program Providers and their responsibilities and roles.

A. Certification Provider Trainers

- Provider Trainers work with the CWA to deliver and certify CWI Providers.
- Certification events are hosted by the CWA.
- Provider Trainer designation is contingent upon meeting the criteria outlined in the certification area specific certification standard.
- Certification Provider Trainers are designated by being active members of the area specific to the Certification Standards Committee and who have contributed to the development of, instruction of, and/or revision of the certification program materials and resources.
- Committee alumni may be approved to act as Provider Trainers by the Certification Committee for specific course offerings.

B. CERTIFICATION PROVIDERS

- Providers may coordinate their own courses and provide a blended learning opportunity with the Community Hub.
- Providers have completed the requirements of the program certifications they offer.
- Provider certification is contingent upon meeting the criteria outlined in the certification area specific certification standard.

C. CERTIFIED CLIMBING WALL WORKERS

- Certified climbing wall workers work within the scope of the elements of their certification.

The Certification Standards documents for each area of certification explain in greater detail the responsibilities of each level of certification within each area of certification.

IV. The Certification Process

A. CANDIDATE PREPARATION

The prospective candidate should meet the prerequisite experience requirement prior to enrollment. Candidates should evaluate their knowledge and skills against the certification standards and undertake any training needed prior to the certification course. Preparation to meet the eligibility criteria for certification may take several months or years. It may be necessary to develop new skills to pass the course's assessment component.

See certification standards document at the end of this document for specific certification Level pre-requisite requirements for each certification program.

To avoid conflicts of interest between the educational and certification functions, the certification program committees do not and cannot accredit courses of study leading to certification. In addition to not accrediting programs leading to the initial certification, the certification program committees do not require that candidates complete a particular organization's program for certification eligibility.

However, the CWA certification programs may provide supplemental educational materials and programs including primary education, exam preparation courses, and study guides. Regardless of any educational materials or programs offered by the certification program, in no case are these materials or programs the only available route to certification and purchase of these supplemental materials or participation in these programs are not required for initial certification.

B. REQUEST INFORMATION AND ENROLL IN COURSE

The candidate can review information on the CWA website, and the introductory courses and certification events available in the CWA Community

Hub. The CWA staff are available to provide additional information regarding the course content, delivery, and expectations. The prospective candidate should self-assess whether they meet the prerequisites for the course. If the applicant determines they are eligible, they may enroll in the appropriate Certification course through the CWA website.

Prior to enrolling, the candidate should ensure they can participate in the required in person and online course requirements. **Providers cannot adequately assess a candidate who does not attend the assessment session(s).**

Enrollment in a certification course starts the application process for certification. **Once enrolled, a candidate has six months to pass the examination component of the course.**

The following are the initial steps of certification:

- A candidate is enrolled or enrolls in the Certification course.
- Candidate goes through **online learning content and assessment.**
- The candidate is assessed on their ability to meet the course learning outcomes by a Provider.
- The Provider records the assessment results in the online course.

C. ATTEND CERTIFICATION COURSE

All candidates must begin certification with the CWA Foundation Course and progress through the Levels of certification in order.

The Certification Courses may be comprised of any of the following delivery formats:

- Virtual calls
- Self-directed content
- Assignments to be completed online and in person
- In person course delivery and assessment
- Exit interview
- Online course content assessment completed
- Periodic course evaluation
- Provider or Provider Trainer evaluation

D. CANDIDATE EVALUATION

The Provider and/or Provider Trainer evaluates each candidate as the course progresses using a standard assessment instrument. The Provider and/or Provider Trainer marks each element on the assessment instrument with a grade of pass, marginal, or fail, and records comments, feedback on specific tasks, skills, or abilities. Providing comments enables the Provider and/or Provider Trainer to have a record of suggested actions the candidate can take to continue to develop skills. This record may be referred to if a candidate appeals the Provider grade. Assessed candidates will receive a pass, marginal or fail on each of the learning outcomes associated with the course. These grades contribute to an overall pass, marginal or failing grade.

The Provider must record the assessment for each candidate in the Community Hub course within two (2) weeks of the in-person assessment.

If the candidate requests and is granted accommodation or if the candidate cannot meet the requirements at the time of the assessment and requests an extension to a later assessment date, a later date assessment may be recorded.

If the candidate cannot pass the assessment at the time scheduled, it is the candidate's responsibility to reschedule and pay applicable fees for instruction and reassessment. If the candidate cannot pass the examination within the six-month period from the course start date, the candidate will receive a failing grade.

E. EXIT INTERVIEWS

Each candidate is offered an exit interview. The one-to-one conversation is an opportunity for both parties, the candidate, and the instructor, to discuss the course experience. The candidate can provide perspective on events which occur during course delivery, and the Provider/Provider Trainer can discuss any performance concerns or questions they may have and provide action items for further professional development.

F. COURSE EVALUATION AND PROVIDER EVALUATION

Participants in any of the CWA courses evaluate the course and the certification Provider in writing through a survey assignment in the course. **The survey must be complete prior to the certification being granted.** The evaluation should include, at a minimum: an assessment of the Provider's performance, recommendations for improvements to the certification course, and a section for general comments.

G. INITIAL CERTIFICATION

Initial certification is valid for three years.

Certified candidates are required to maintain certification through the following avenues:

- Ongoing professional development
- Maintenance of any complementary certifications (ex: first aid)
- Review of course materials and resources on a regular basis
- Participation in activities related to the certification
- Providers and Provider Trainers must maintain affiliation with a CWA member organization.

If any of the requirements of being a certified candidate are no longer met, then the certification status is suspended.

*Specific certification requirements for each of the certification areas are described within the area specific Certification Standard found in the Appendices.

H. CONTINUING CERTIFICATION

Certificants are notified approximately six (6) months prior to the expiration of their certification and are encouraged to renew their certification. The certificant can either choose to take the entire course over again or complete the renewal through continuing education credits. At a minimum, the re-certification course must include an evaluation using the current program assessment instrument.

The CWA attempts to offer four certification opportunities per year. This provides all candidates the opportunity of access to 4 certification opportunities within the 6 months prior to expiration of certification and 6 months post expiration of certification.

If certification lapses for more than 6 months, the certificant will be removed from the certification roster maintained by the CWA. If certification has lapsed, the candidate must retake the course to regain certification.

V. Certification Program Training Format

A. PROGRAM PROVIDER AND/OR PROVIDER TRAINER RESPONSIBILITIES

As instructors and assessors of candidates for certification, Providers and trainers are representatives of the CWA, the facilities they operate in, and themselves. Additionally, Providers have a responsibility to participants.

The following is a list of responsibilities to the CWA:

1. Complete administrative responsibilities in the respective certification course offering. These responsibilities include the following for a respective program:
 - Determine course planning such as scheduling, registration, and course cost for candidates (if any). This requirement may be facilitated in coordination with the CWA.
 - Monitor candidates progress through the online course content.
 - Make reasonable accommodation for requests if requested.
 - Be present for the assessment activities of any course.
 - Follow current Certification program curriculum and standards.
 - Use the current standard evaluation instruments and tools.
 - Provide the final assessment of each candidate within 14 days (about 2 weeks) of their assessment period.
 - Maintain accurate employment and profile information; meet the continuing education requirements and participate in required updates required to retain program Provider status. (See more

information in the Appendices under the specific certification standards.)

- Comply with all necessary rules and regulations regarding facility use.
- Coordinate course fees and enrollment with the CWA.

B. MAINTAINING PROVIDER STATUS

CWI program Providers are expected to offer certification courses periodically to keep their knowledge of the program and curriculum current.

To maintain program Provider certification in good standing, you must:

- Teach, co-teach, or observe at least one certification course every certification cycle (three years).
- Attend a program Provider training or refresher course or participate in CWA offered continuing education courses once every certification cycle (three years).
- Pay the program fees for maintenance of certification.

**Providers are required to sign an attestation and agreement with the CWA and their CWA member facility to offer CWI certifications. Failure to maintain the agreement does not revoke provider certification, however, a Provider is considered inactive if the conditions of the agreement has changed or is no longer valid. It is incumbent on the Provider to inform the CWA of changes to their employment and update the Provider agreement.*

CWI program Providers that fail to meet the above requirements become 'inactive'. If inactive Providers wish to reinstate their CWI Provider certification, they must ensure they meet the afore mentioned criteria within 6 months of lapsing.

C. MAINTAINING PROVIDER TRAINER STATUS

Provider Trainer status is awarded to Provider Trainers who:

- Meet the certification requirements.

- Teach, co-teach, or observe at least one certification course every certification cycle (three years).
- Attend certification standards committee meetings no less than 50% of the meetings per annum.
- Assist in the development of course tools, manuals, curriculum and policy development.

VI. Certification Course Delivery

A. COURSE ELEMENTS

Certification courses are delivered on behalf of the CWA. Any certified candidate is a representative of the CWA.

Each certification course includes the following elements:

- Online learning
- Demonstration of skills
- Assessment and Exit Interview

Online learning content is available to candidates through the Community Hub. Online learning content should be completed prior to the assessment experience for a course. If the online learning content is not completed, it is at the discretion of the Provider or Provider Trainer if the candidate can attend the assessment. The candidate will not receive a certificate until the online learning content is completed.

Skills are demonstrated and reviewed by a Provider or Provider Trainer.

B. THE CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

The certification standards and the learning outcomes are the framework for the evaluation and decision.

Candidates must be assessed in the following three course elements:

- Content completion
- Quizzing
- Provider assessment

SCORING

- A candidate must meet all the certification requirements with either a marginal or pass to be considered for certification.

- A candidate with a failing grade will not be eligible for certification at that time. A candidate may request a reassessment within 6 months of the start of the course. A reassessment fee is at the discretion of the Provider or Provider Trainer.
- A candidate meeting the minimum course requirement of no more than 3 marginal scores will have passed the course.
- A candidate with 4 or more marginal scores will be considered to have failed to meet sufficient learning outcomes for certification.

Course elements are graded using the relative value indicated in the table within each individual Certification Standard. When a course is offered virtually, there are additional assignments which must be provided for the completion of the course. A student who misses a virtual call may be given an additional assignment.

C. COMPLETING THE ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT FOR EACH CANDIDATE

The purpose of the assessment instrument is to communicate the Provider or Provider Trainer's findings to the candidate formally. The Provider or Provider Trainer will spend some time comparing their notes and recording results in the online assessment rubric.

Each certification standard is listed as pass, marginal or fail. When the assessment is published, the CWI candidate can see their grade and feedback.

D. Conducting Exit Interviews

The purpose of the exit interview is to:

- 1) Discuss the results of the course examination components
 - a. provide feedback regarding specific actions
 - b. clarify any remaining questions or correct any factual errors
- 2) Describe the next steps in the certification process – completing the evaluation.
- 3) Provide guidance for further training and learning.

If there is feedback for the candidate of a sensitive nature, or if the candidate is likely to fail the course, the Provider or Provider Trainer may choose to meet with the candidate in advance to prepare him/her for the feedback so there are no surprises during the exit interview.

The Provider or Provider Trainer starts the discussion with a general overview of their findings including strengths, weaknesses, etc.

The focus during the exit interview is on the observations of the candidate's performance based on facts and specific examples.

The Providers must use the assessment tool's feedback section in the course to verify their score. A difference of opinion regarding the Provider's findings and the candidate's assessment of his or her own performance should be stated in the feedback section in the assessment.

The Provider or Provider Trainer's assessment is final. A candidate may request an appeal of the assessment as described in a future section.

Assessment results are recorded in the online portal. Assessment should include the Provider or Provider Trainer comments during the exit interview.

VI. OTHER POLICIES

The Certification Standards Committee meets periodically either in face-to-face meetings or virtual call. The certification standards committee is responsible for the following:

- To maintain a certification standards document or documents consistent with the current edition of the CWA Industry Practices: A Sourcebook for the Operation of Manufactured Climbing Walls.
- For assisting in identifying individuals qualified to become Providers of the certification program and to actively promote the program.
- For developing and overseeing a fair, impartial, and transparent appeals process related to certification decisions which are contested.
- To discuss any certificant or certification program Provider who should be removed from the roster for cause, ethical breach, conflict of interest, or for a lack of participation.
- To discuss any certificant or certification program Provider applicant who should be considered for exceptional consideration or accommodation.

A. CERTIFICATION STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The committee meets periodically to conduct its business. The committee, at its discretion, may invite Providers and/or candidates to participate in open portions of its meeting for discussion and information gathering, but reserves the right to enter executive session to determine its course of action regarding appeals or other potentially sensitive matters. In executive session, the committee will prepare motions regarding any outstanding issues and move its adoption by simple majority vote.

The committee has the authority to grant, deny, suspend, or withdraw certification status for any certificant or Provider. The committee also has the authority to give a warning to any certificant or Provider if there is cause for such a warning. Usually, a warning results in some failure, oversight, or lack of compliance with certification standards, program policies, or program procedures. The person will be advised of the decision in writing.

B. CONFIDENTIALITY IN THE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The official minutes of CWA Certification Standards Committee are available to the public upon request. However, all other data, recommendations, observations, conversations, reports, and working documents related to the committee's business are confidential. Acceptance of membership on the committee or acceptance as a program Provider constitutes a contractual agreement to safeguard the confidentiality of information acquired in these capacities.

Certification decisions are made by program Providers and Provider Trainers. The CWA, the Provider Trainer and Provider are responsible for ensuring that the candidate's application status and examination results are held confidential. If a candidate is certified that information shall be disclosed to the public. No other data, recommendations, observations, conversations, reports, and working documents related to the certificant will be shared publicly without the express written or opt-in permission of the certificant, or unless the Provider is compelled to disclose such information by legal action.

CWA shall only share information about Providers or certificants in the following limited circumstances:

- You claim to be certified and we are verifying your certification status.
- You provide us with your express written or opt-in consent for the sharing of program related information.
- We provide such information to our subsidiaries, affiliated companies, Providers or other trusted businesses or persons to administer the program. We require that these parties agree to handle such information based on our instructions and in compliance with this confidentiality policy and any other appropriate security measures.
- We have a good faith belief that access, use, preservation or disclosure of such information is reasonably necessary to (a) satisfy any applicable law, regulation, legal process or enforceable governmental request (b) detect, prevent, or otherwise address fraud, violations of policy, security or technical issues, or (c) protect against harm to the rights, property or safety of CWA, its members or the public as required or permitted by law.

C. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

The Provider notifies the candidate of the certification decision in writing through the evaluation instrument at the course's end. The Provider is responsible for notifying the CWA of the certification decision within two weeks of the certification course's conclusion. Only the Provider is authorized to notify the candidate of the certification decision. The Provider records the information in the online course assessment. The CWA will maintain an authoritative and exclusive list of program Providers and certificants.

Certification decisions, affirmative or negative, or decisions to withdraw certification status shall be public information unless under appeal. Providers or certificants must not misrepresent their certification status to the public or to their clients. The CWA retains the right to release information or reports, when necessary, to correct or clarify inaccurate information released by a Provider, certificant or other sources. Requests for information regarding the official list of Providers or certificants may be directed to the CWA staff. The only information that shall be released regarding non-certified individuals is simply, "The person is not CWA Certified."

The CWA will maintain the definitive list of program Providers and certificants. A list of all Providers shall be published periodically by the Climbing Wall Association and made available on its web site.

D. RE-EXAMINATION AND APPEALS

INFORMAL APPEAL OR RE-EXAMINATION

A candidate may appeal against a Provider's decision in the case of a disagreement regarding the certification decision. The first step in the appeals process is for the candidate to inform the Provider and request a date for re-testing. The request for re-testing must be made to the Provider in writing within thirty days of the candidate's initial assessment. The Provider will inform the CWA of the request for re-testing.

The date of re-testing must be at least two weeks from the conclusion of the course. This means that if a candidate has been evaluated, and has not passed, a candidate must wait a minimum of 2 weeks before a second assessment. The final assessments must be completed within six months of the start of a

course. We encourage candidates and Providers to plan their testing schedules carefully. An exam fee will be assessed by the Provider for re-testing.

FORMAL APPEALS

If the candidate has failed upon re-testing, they may appeal the Provider's decision to the CWA in writing within 30 days (about 4 and a half weeks) of the re-testing. The written appeal, and any supporting documentation, must be sent to the CWA staff. The CWA staff will notify the Certification Standards Committee and schedule a teleconference. If the deadline is not met, the Provider's decision will stand. The Provider's decision may be overturned or modified if one or more of the following circumstances exist:

- When it can be shown that the Provider acted arbitrarily, capriciously, or unfairly.
- When it can be shown that the certification decision was based on a dated, inaccurate, or incomplete assessment.

The issues to be considered on appeal must be limited to the original information previously submitted to the Provider and the CWA. Reference to subsequent developments, training, etc. shall not be considered by the committee on appeal. If a candidate completes additional training or practice and can meet the assessment requirements, the candidate may request a re-test under the conditions stipulated above.

The appeals process is conducted by the Certification Standards Committee that either affirms the Provider's decision or makes a recommendation for reconsideration to the Provider. The process is described below:

- The hearing shall be held at a mutually convenient time for the committee, candidate, and Provider.
- The committee shall convene a hearing via video call. The members of the committee must be mutually acceptable to the candidate and the Provider. A committee member may be asked to recuse himself or herself at the request of either the candidate or the Provider if a conflict of interest exists.
- The hearing must be conducted by a quorum of the committee. If a quorum of mutually agreeable persons cannot be established, the CWA board of directors may appoint a three-person panel to hear the appeal.

- The members of the panel must be mutually acceptable to the candidate and the Provider.
- The committee or hearing panel may affirm the Provider's decision; recommend to Provider that it reconsider the decision, giving reasons; or refer the candidate to another Provider. The committee's conclusions must be recorded in committee minutes.
 - The status of the candidate shall remain unchanged during the appeal. There shall be no public notice related to the matter until the appeals process is completed and the committee or panel has made its final decision. The final decision of the committee or panel shall be forwarded to the candidate and Provider in writing.
 - Any expenses related to referral, re-taking the course with another Provider, or re-testing shall be borne by the candidate.

E. ALTERNATIVE QUALIFICATION PROCESS

The CWA has established an alternative qualification procedure for program participants. The alternative qualification procedure will allow qualified candidates to become certified given proof of comparable certification.

The alternative qualification procedure will entail the following:

- Documenting all qualifications
- Documenting extensive prior experience
- Participating in online learning activities
- Submitting documentation of teaching
- Taking an examination

This provision will allow an owner/operator to certify his or her own staff to the published standards immediately. A Provider wishing to provide a certification course to the general public must also complete the Provider training prior to offering the open enrollment certification course to the public.

F. QUALIFICATION BY RECIPROCITY

The CWA may issue certification at any time to individuals applying for certification reciprocity. To qualify for reciprocity an applicant must have a current certification, meet or exceed all of CWA's experience requirements,

meet or exceed CWA's certification standards and pay the appropriate fees and participate in CWI program online learning to familiarize the candidate with the certification program.

The applicant must have taken and passed an equivalent assessment of skills as required by the CWA within three years of the date of application. If a candidate holds a current certification by another body (i.e. hold a certificate which is active and was obtained through direct assessment with a passing score) the candidate may be eligible to receive certification from CWA through reciprocity, following these steps:

- Schedule a communication with the CWA certification coordinator.
- Register for a recognized certification course.
- Certification depends on the candidate meeting all certification program requirements including a successful assessment, review of the course materials, and demonstrating the required experience.
- The certification expiration date for reciprocity candidates will be identical to the current certification expiration date.

If you meet CWA's certification, education and experience requirements but have not taken an assessment equivalent to CWA's, you are not eligible to receive a CWA certificate through reciprocity.

G. CERTIFICATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

The CWA values constructive evaluation of its standards and programs. Persons involved in the CWA certification program should be afforded the opportunity to evaluate the standards, the program, and the Provider. Each course's online learning component gives participants the opportunity to evaluate the Provider and content. The suitability of the standards for a given program may also be evaluated directly with the Certification Standards Committee.

H. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP AND FEES

Providers and Provider Trainers must be inheriting member benefits from an employer or their own membership. CWA membership fees are assessed

annually. A Provider whose membership lapses for greater than 90 days (3 months) cannot enroll candidates. However, prior certifications conferred by the Provider will remain in effect until the certifications expire. If a removed Provider re-joins, Provider status may be reinstated pending application, review and approval by the Certification Standards Committee. There are no membership requirements for non-Provider certificants.

I. CONTINUING CERTIFICATION

Certification is valid for **three years** contingent upon ongoing activity and professional development in the indoor climbing industry. A certificant seeking re-certification may opt to complete a full certification course or an assessment.

The re-certification process should be complete within six months of the certification expiration date. If a certificant allows their certification to lapse, the certification is expired for the period from the certification expiration date until re-certification. A Provider or Provider Trainer with an expired certification will not be able to enroll candidates in online course content or assess candidates for certification.

The requirements for continuing certification are based on the certification standards current at the time of the assessment. The re-certification will focus on the current certification standards, professional development since the last assessment, and any new domains of knowledge or learning added to the standards document since the candidate's last exam.

Certification standards are reviewed and revised sometimes. **It is the responsibility of certificants to keep their knowledge of certification standards and professional practices current.**

J. CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT (CEU)

The CWA provides continuing education opportunities for certified participants interested in maintaining their certification. (CEUs) Continuing Education

Credits must meet the following to be credited toward ongoing certification and renewal.

- Fall within one of the recognized area requirements for certification
- Have learning outcomes relevant to the industry
- Meet the minimum required participation requirements
- Candidates are assessed by a certified instructor or trainer
- Be approved for CEU credit prior to participation

Certified program participants may request that the certification standards committee review a course offered outside of the CWA for CEU credit. Should the committee determine the course meets the criteria, the successful candidate will be awarded the appropriate credit hours of study as outlined in the specific Certification Standard.

An approved list of Continuing Education Credits may be requested from the CWA or found in the Resources location in the Community Hub.

K. Conflict of Interest

The CWA maintains a conflict-of-interest policy for board members, staff, committees and volunteers. Persons associated with the certification program should be careful to avoid conflict of interest. Any persons with a conflict of interest or who may not be able to act impartially regarding the program or certification decisions shall disclose the conflict to the CWA staff, recuse themselves from the specific program matters at issue or certification process in question, and under extraordinary circumstances offer to resign his or her position if the conflict cannot be resolved and is of a sufficiently important nature.

Furthermore, Providers should avoid any situation that might compromise their professional judgment regarding candidates and certification decisions. Questions concerning potential conflicts of interest for Providers should be referred to the CWA staff or to the CWA Certification Standards Committee.

APPENDICES

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STANDARDS

Within each area of certification, there are three different certification standards:

- Climbing Wall Instructor Certification (CWI)
- Work at Height Certification (WAH)
- Professional Routesetting Certification (PRS)

Common to all areas of certification are the following elements:

- Creation date and latest revision date for the Standard
- Statement of Standard specific to the certification program
- Eligibility Requirements for prospective candidates for certification
- Responsibilities of certified candidates
- Program Standard
- Continuing Education Credit (CEU) and Renewal
- Related Documents, Forms and Tools

CWI CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STANDARD

Responsible Position: CWA

Date Created: 2010

Date Last Revised: October 16, 2023

STATEMENT OF CLIMBING WALL INSTRUCTOR (CWI) CERTIFICATION STANDARD

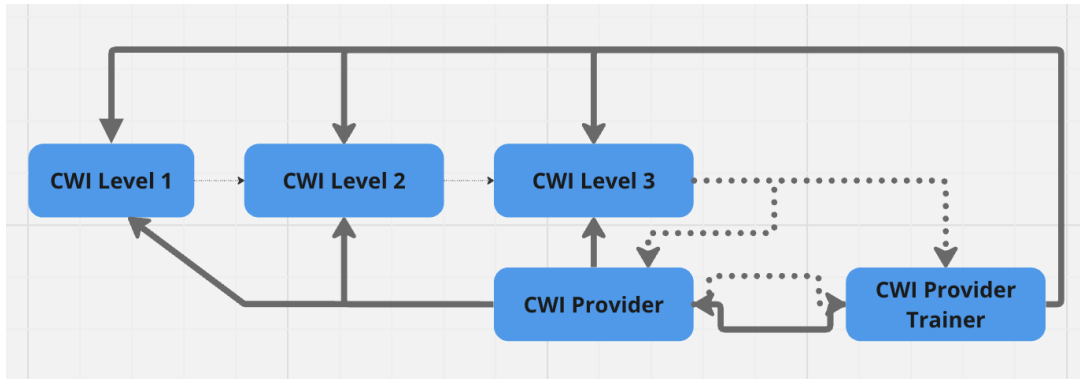
The **mission** of the CWI Certification Program is to:

- Create and maintain quality guidelines, training programs, and resources.
- Monitor and share industry information, trends, and progress.
- Educate climbing facilities on the value of instructor certification and the contributions and professionalism of instructors.

The scope of the CWI Program Standard is for the instruction of climbing skills. Specifically, the scope includes the following areas:

- Knowledge instructors need to assess the skills of climbers in a facility
- Industry Practices for indoor climbing facilities
- Use of PPE appropriate for different climbing environments
- Education principles when instructing climbing skills
- Risk Management principles

CWI CERTIFICATION PATHWAY



Key to the Graphic

- The dotted line represents the certification required as a prerequisite to the next certification.
- The solid line represents who does the training for the certification level.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

CWI Certifications may be taken concurrently. Higher levels of CWI certification are not valid if prerequisite CWI certification assessment criteria have not been met.

CWI Level 1 Certified

- Applicants must be 16 years of age or older
- Applicants for the CWI can climb V0
- Complete the CWA Foundations course

CWI Level 2 Certified

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older within 6 months of the assessment date
- Completed CWI Level 1
- Has completed 20 roped climbing outings participating in both climbing and belaying using a passive and an assisted braking belay device
- Ability to demonstrate climbing at a 5.8 level

CWI Level 3 Certified

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
- Have completed CWI Level 2
- Ability to lead climb 5.9
- Completed a minimum of 40 lead climbing outings where they have both belayed and climbed
- Familiarity belaying with both assisted braking devices and passive belay devices

CWI Providers

- Applicants must be 21 years of age or older
- CWI Providers have completed and are certified CWA CWI Level 3
- Have current first aid certification
- Minimum 200 hours of work as an indoor climbing wall manager
- Ability to lead climb 5.9
- Signed agreement and attestation
- Proof of liability insurance coverage

CWI Provider Trainers

- CWI Provider Trainers must be members of the CWI Certification Standards Committee

RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles and responsibilities of certified candidates within the CWI Certification program are outlined below:

CWI Level 1 Certified

- Act in accordance with the certification's scope.
- Maintain the requirements of certification as outlined in the Certification Program Policy Manual.
- Comply with CWI Certification Standard practices as outlined in the student manual.
- Act as a climbing wall worker offering orientations, and monitoring climbing activities.

CWI Level 2 Certified

- Act in accordance with the certification's scope.
- Maintain the requirements of certification as outlined in the Certification Program Policy Manual.
- Comply with CWI Certification Standard practices as outlined in the Student Manual.
- Use equipment that meets the CWA Certification Standard for climbing activities.
- Cultivate an instructional environment that cultivates trust and learning.
- Use appropriate communication skills and instructional skills to prepare climbers.
- Demonstrate sound judgement.
- Act as a climbing facility monitor, offer orientations, belay checks and orientations for top rope climbing.

CWI Level 3 Certified

- Act in accordance with the certification's scope and standards.
- Maintain the requirements of certification as outlined in the Certification Program Policy Manual.
- Comply with CWI Certification Standard practices as outlined in student manual.
- Use equipment that meets the CWA CWI Certification Standard for climbing activities.
- Cultivate an instructional environment that cultivates trust and learning.
- Use appropriate communication skills and instructional skills to prepare climbers.
- Demonstrate sound judgement.
- Act as a climbing facility monitor, offer orientations, belay checks and orientations for top rope and lead climbing.

CWI Providers

- Enroll prospective CWI Level 1,2 and/or 3 candidates in the online learning course.
- Pay the course fee on behalf of the candidates required at the time of enrollment.

- Answer any questions regarding online content Provider candidates may have.
- Clearly communicate the date, time, and location of the in-person assessment.
- Conduct assessment of prospective PRS Level 1 certificants.
- Deliver activities allowing CWI Level 1,2 and 3 registrants to demonstrate they can meet or exceed the minimum standard for certification.
- Record the results of assessment in the online learning course assessment tool, along with any person notes regarding the course delivery that are assistance to the Certification committee and/or the CWA in the review of the certification.
- Abide by the rules governing certification outlined in the CWA Certification Program Policy Manual.
- Act as a climbing facility monitor, offer orientations, belay checks and orientations for top rope and lead climbing.
- Offer CWI certification courses and assessments.
- Assist in the operational decision making within a climbing facility.
- Participate in the CWA CWI Certification Standards Committee

CWI Provider Trainers

- Assess alternative pathway and/or reciprocity requests for prospective CWI candidates.
- Maintain regular attendance at CWA CWI Certification Standards Committee meetings.
- Work in collaboration with the Certification Standards Committee members reporting any challenges, concerns with content, content delivery and course logistics.
- Abide by the rules governing certification outlined in the CWA Certification Program Policy Manual.
- Offer CWI and CWI Provider certification courses and assessments.
- Complete the certification course administration requirements for candidates in the certification program.
- Review resources and tools, develop resources and/or deliver instruction and assessment for prospective CWI programs and offerings.

CWI CERTIFICATION INSTRUCTIONAL STANDARD

The CWA has an Industry Practices committee who defines and publishes Industry standards for facility operation. The Certification Standards committee determines the standards for the CWI Program.

Operational practices will vary from one climbing facility to another. Some facilities will opt for a higher standard or more rigid set of policies than the prescribed industry standards. The following is a table outlines the **CWI Certification Standards** defined by the CWA.

As a representative of the CWA, it is expected that CWI certified instructors will follow the CWI certification standards.

Area	CWI Certification Program Standard
Professionalism	CWI certified instructors and Providers are expected to operate in accordance with a demeanor of professionalism as defined through this program, Embodying the respect toward oneself and others, being responsible, holding oneself to account, being conscientious and to continue to develop and expand one's knowledge regarding the climbing industry.
Access rules and practices	<p>Instruction of youth can begin at an early age, assuming the youth can properly wear the equipment required and the impact from falls is adequately protected.</p> <p>Parents or guardians of any youth are expected to be informed of the risks and agree to the youth's participation PRIOR to participation in climbing activities.</p> <hr/> <p>Youth are directly supervised when in instructional programs throughout the program's duration.</p> <p>The ratio of instructor to student for youth between 5-7 years of age is 1:6.</p> <p>Youth is defined as any participant under 14.</p>

Participant Agreement	<p>Ensuring that the participant agreement was signed prior to instructing a group is part of an instructor's role.</p> <p>Documented participant agreements must be properly stored to protect confidentiality of participants. It is part of the instructor's responsibility to protect the personal information of all facility users.</p>
Instructor/student ratio	<p>8:1 is recognized ratio for adults 6:1 for youth</p>
Facility Inspection	<p>Inspecting the area of a facility where instruction will occur is the instructor's responsibility before the course starts. Inspection of the facility, walls, flooring, equipment should be documented. Review the facility inspection elements of the manual for details.</p>
Equipment	<p>Any equipment used during instruction should be inspected prior to use. Questionable equipment should not be used. Equipment inspection should be documented. Monitor the care during the course. Ensure that equipment is used and inspected in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.</p>
Emergency Action Plans	<p>Instructors should ensure they are aware of the Emergency Action Plan and their role in an emergency situation. Instructors have a duty of care to maintain the safety and supervision of participants.</p>
Duty to Report	<p>An instructor working with youth has a duty to report any suspected mistreatment or harm. It is an instructor's responsibility to be clear to whom they need to report this information and how to document the incident.</p>
Height limits	<p>Instructors are responsible for reviewing the height limits for smaller participants in their programs and determining if it would be in the best interest of the participants to lower the height limit to reduce the risk of injury or harm.</p>
Participation limits	<p>There are no minimum or maximum ages for participation in climbing. However, equipment may not be suitable for all bodies or health</p>

	<p>considerations. If equipment cannot be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, participation may be limited.</p>
Flooring in facilities	<p>Each climbing facility is expected to follow the guidelines of the flooring installer. Instructors are likewise expected to follow the guidelines for inspection, use and care of any flooring in the facility. Limits may include whether participants can rest on the floor near the walls, food and drink in the climbing area, the use of outdoor shoes. Instructors must abide by and enforce the rules in the facility they are instructing.</p>
Bouldering	<p>Confirm climbers are willing to accept the risks in bouldering. This can be done by asking the climber to climb and demonstrate a fall.</p> <p>Expected elements of the Bouldering Orientation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have climbers demonstrate a fall ○ Have climbers demonstrate falling techniques, downclimbing ○ Have climbers explain where the fall zones extend to <p>New climbers participate in bouldering orientation Explain rules, enforce the rules</p>
Spotting	<p>An instructor has a responsibility to explain the pros and cons of spotting, when it is appropriate, how to spot correctly if it is allowed in the facility.</p> <p>Follow facility rules on spotting</p>
Facility monitoring	<p>Monitor all climbing activities of course participants Monitoring includes periodically walking through the climbing area to ensure that hidden areas can be monitored. Monitoring includes checking that climbers are exhibiting the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sound falling techniques ○ Communication with others climbing in the same area ○ Partner checks or double checks on auto belays ○ Tying in correctly, clipping in correctly on auto belays ○ Conducting a retraction test of auto belays ○ Using equipment in accordance with manufacturer's instructions ○ Maintaining control of the brake strand of the rope when belaying

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Returning equipment to stations for next climbers use ○ Abiding by the rules of the facility
Auto belays	<p>Provide orientation as directed by the manufacturer and the key elements outlined in the Unit 3 Auto Belay and Top Rope Student Manual.</p> <p>CWI Instructors ask the climber to demonstrate use of the auto belay device, including taking a fall and being lowered as part of the orientation.</p>
Auto Belay check	<p>Prior to assuming a client understands how to safely use an auto belay, the CWI conducts an auto belay check. Elements of the check include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Climber can clip into the device correctly ○ Climber conducts a retraction test ○ Climber conducts a self-check or double-check prior to climbing ○ Climber climbs within the area appropriate for the device ○ Climber does not redirect the lanyard ○ Climber is comfortable taking a fall ○ Climber lowers properly to the ground ○ Climber returns the lanyard to the floor anchor, leaving it appropriately set up for the next climber ○
Belay check	<p>Back up belay is provided with new belayers or where there is unknown skill.</p> <p>CWI Instructors ask climbers to demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set up for climbing using the figure eight rethreaded ○ Set up for belaying properly <p>Ensure climber and belayer make appropriate adjustments to manage weight difference. This could include the use of an anchor, weighted backpack, where the belayer stands and how they react to the fall, use of a braking resistor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct partner checks ○ Use commands to confirm readiness for climbing ○ Ensure climber climbs in the appropriate area for the rope they are on

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure the belayer maintains control and is ready to place the rope in the brake position in case of a fall. ○ Ensure the climbers have the appropriate reaction to a fall. ○ Ensure lowering is done at the appropriate speed and consistency ○ Leaving the equipment ready for use by the next group of climbers
Knots	CWI instructors use a figure eight rethreaded with a safety knot or a minimum of 6 inches for a tail during instruction.
Knot at end of brake rope	Not required
Belay device	<p>All belay equipment should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendation for use.</p> <p>If the instructor is not familiar with a piece of equipment and how it should be correctly used, the instructor should not allow that equipment's use.</p> <p>Some facilities have rules regarding which equipment may be used in their facility. Instructors are expected to follow the specific rules of the facility in which they are working.</p>
Belay technique	<p>Back up belay for new belayers or unknown belayers.</p> <p>Instructors may offer instruction with the following belay techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Waterfall ○ PBUS ○ Hand Over Hand <p>Pinch and Slide, Slip Slap Slide NOT recommended</p> <p>Tunnelling is not recommended for novice belayers</p>
Elements of Lead belay check	<p>See all the previous belay check elements and additionally confirm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Climber demonstrates appropriate clipping stances ○ Climber demonstrates finding the appropriate clipping position relative to the bolt – i.e.: not reaching too high or passing the clips ○ Belayer smoothly feeds out rope in preparation of clipping and takes in slack as appropriate ○ Belayer provides a soft catch, allowing the appropriate fall length

Lead climbing – personal ropes	Some climbing facilities may allow users to bring in their personal climbing equipment including ropes. In this instance, the facility may recommend or enforce users to tie a knot at the end of the rope to ensure the belayer does not run out of rope.

CWI CONTINUING EDUCATION AND RENEWAL

Certifications expire after a three-year period. Renewal of certification can occur in the following ways:

- Retake the certification process in its entirety
- Participate in the renewal course
- Successful completion of required CEU’s provided and/or recognized by the CWA

The CEU pathway requires candidates to obtain CEU credit hours in the following distribution:

- Risk Management 0.5 CEU
- Education, Coaching 0.5 CEU
- Rescues and Technical Skills 0.5 CEU
- Conference, Volunteer contribution 0.5 CEU

Candidates who earn 1.5 CEU’s per certification cycle (3-year period) will maintain their certification. The 1.5 CEU credits may be earned in any combination of the four areas identified. CEU credit hours may be earned with attendance at approved conferences and/or committee contributions.

One CEU may be obtained by participation and successful completion of a **recognized ten contact hour course, conference or committee attendance** offered by a qualified Provider for CEU credential.

A CEU cannot be awarded for an event less than one hour in length or for a course or program which does not assess the candidates or receive a course evaluation.

RELATED DOCUMENTS, FORMS AND TOOLS

- The CWA Industry Practices
- The CWI Student Manuals – Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3
- The CWA Certification Program Policy Manual
- The CWA CWI Provider Program Manual
- Activity Planning Tool
- CWI Assessment Tools for each level of certification

NOTE: Employees should have awareness and training for any specific facility Emergency Action plan.

WAH CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STANDARD

Responsible Position: CWA

Date Created: 2015

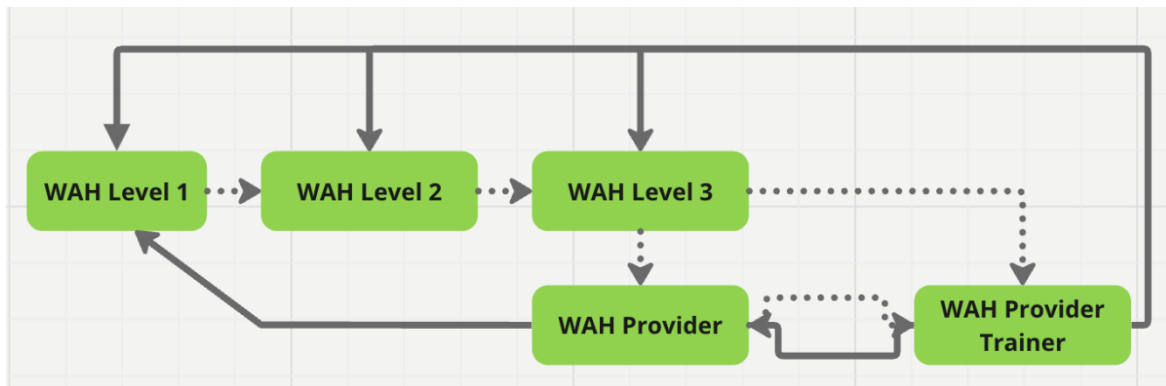
Date Last Revised: February 2024

STATEMENT OF STANDARD

The purpose of the Work at Height Certification Standard is to inform and educate workers in climbing facilities of industry standards for operations. To provide certification opportunities and assess the competency for the following areas when working at height:

- Risk management
- Technical skills
- Equipment inspection, use and care
- Rescues at height

WORK AT HEIGHT CERTIFICATION PATHWAY



Key to the Graphic

- The dotted line represents the certification required as a prerequisite to the next certification.
- The solid line represents who does the training for the certification level.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following description starts with the lowest level of certification and moves toward the most stringent level of certification.

WAH Level 1 Technicians

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
- Complete the CWA Foundations course
- Can climb 5.9 on lead
- Can lift 50 pounds

WAH Level 2 Technicians

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
- Completed WAH Level 1 assessment

WAH Level 3 Technicians and Provider

- Applicants must be 21 years of age or older
- Have completed WAH Level 2 assessment

- First Aid training of minimum 5.5-6 hours
- *Minimum of 200 hours of work within the supervisory and management arena in a climbing facility.*
- WAH Providers have completed and are certified CWA WAH Level 3 Technicians

WAH Provider Trainers

- Applicants to act as WAH Provider Trainer must be members of the WAH Certification Standards Committee
- Successfully completed WAH Provider Training

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of those involved in the WAH are outlined below. Note the inclusion of the facility employer responsibilities as outlined by regulatory requirements.

Common to every level of certification, responsibilities include:

- Act in accordance with the certification's scope.
- Maintain the requirements of certification as outlined in the Certification Program Policy Manual.
- Comply with WAH Certification Standard practices as outlined in the student manual.
- Proper use and care of PPE
- Uses approved access methods to work at height
- Function within one's scope of knowledge.
- Act professionally in the workplace.

WAH Level 1 Technicians

- Can be assigned work at height tasks.
- Assist in rescue activities as directed.
- Identify and avoid hazards.
- Follow the guidance of more experienced WAH workers.

WAH Level 2 Technicians

- Use effective communication skills when providing feedback and guidance.

- Demonstrate sound judgement.
- Identify and eliminate existing and predictable hazards with corrective measures.
- Enact a Rescue plan.
- Supervise work at height activities.

WAH Level 3 Technicians and Providers

- Cultivate a work environment that cultivates trust and learning.
- Can design and supervise the installation of the fall protection system for work at height in a climbing facility.
- Communicate with other climbing wall workers about the hazards, controls and required PPE equipment for working at height.
- Document work at height procedures including PPE, access methods, fall protection and rescues.
- Train and prepare WAH staff with skills and knowledge required to comply with the Work at Height Plan for your facility.
- Enroll prospective WAH Level 1 candidates in the online learning course.
- Pay the course fee on behalf of the candidates required at the time of enrollment.
- Answer candidates' questions regarding online content.
- Communicate the date, time and location of the in-person assessment.
- Conduct training and assessment of WAH Level 1 candidates.
- Deliver activities allowing WAH Level 1 registrants to demonstrate they can meet or exceed the minimum standard for certification.
- Record the results of assessment in the online learning course assessment tool, along with any person notes regarding the course delivery that are assistance to the Certification committee and/or the CWA in the review of the certification.

WAH Provider Trainers

- Assess alternative pathway and/or reciprocity requests for prospective WAH candidates.
- Maintain regular attendance at CWA WAH Certification Standards Committee meetings.
- Work in collaboration with the Certification Standards Committee members reporting any challenges, concerns with content, content delivery and course logistics.

- Abide by the rules governing certification outlined in the CWA Certification Program Policy Manual.
- Offer WAH and WAH Provider certification courses and assessments.
- Complete the certification course administration requirements for candidates in the certification program.
- Review resources and tools, develop resources and/or deliver instruction and assessment for prospective WAH programs and offerings.

CWA WORK AT HEIGHT PROGRAM STANDARD

The Work-at-Height Standard is intended to meet the following:

- Assist the employer in identifying, evaluating, eliminating, or controlling the risks and hazards related to work-at-height in a climbing facility, to the extent possible, in a manner consistent with accepted industry practices and existing legal requirements.
- To be flexible in its implementation. In this regard, it is valuable to note that professional judgment is a principal element in any workplace. Although the Work-at-Height Standard represents an industry effort to outline responsible workplace practices, professional judgment may, in each circumstance, justify a deviation from any standard when a deviation is in the best interest of the worker's health, safety or well-being.
- To improve the efficiency and consistency of practice of appropriate access methods, fall protection, work positioning, material handling when there is a need to work at height and have use of both hands. These practices are assessed as technical skills in the Work at Height standard.
- This standard is intended for use by recreational climbing wall facilities, both sport climbing and bouldering facilities, where employees, or other persons, are exposed to fall hazards while working at height (for example: routesetting, performing inspections, etc.)

A comprehensive Work at Height Standard can be found through the CWA WAH resources. The following information is a short form of topics covered in the certification courses. Regulatory requirements from various sources can be found in the Annex of the comprehensive WAH Standard.

AREA	CWA WAH PROGRAM STANDARD
Job Hazard Analysis	WAH Level 1 certificants follow a JHA WAH Level 2 and 3 certificants can prepare a JHA
Work at Height Plan or Fall Protection Plan	WAH Level 1 and certificants follow a Work at Height Plan WAH Level 3 certificants can prepare a Work at Height Plan

Initial Access Front of wall	Attended Belay or Auto belay are recommended approaches to establishing suspension systems and fall arrest lines.
Initial Access Back of wall	Structure climbing may be used to access the work area. A fall arrest system or suspension must be always used. This includes a fixed line fall arrest or Y lanyards.
Work System or Suspension system	<p>After initial access, suspension and fall arrest lines can be established,</p> <p>The most preferred system is a two rope system where one line is for ascending and descending and the other line is dedicated to a fall arrest device.</p> <p>Suspension systems are not designed for fall arrest.</p> <p>Suspension systems must <i>always be under load</i> during work.</p>
Ladders	<p>Ladders should be used as described in the instructions for use affixed to the ladder.</p> <p>CWA recommends additional stabilization methods are implemented when positioning the ladder on impact attenuating surfaces.</p>
Personal Protection Equipment	<p>The employer should provide or designate required PPE for WAH. Employer owned equipment must be maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition.</p> <p>PPE for WAH may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ascenders - Braking devices - Connectors - Descenders - Fall arrestors - Full Body Harnesses - Helmets - Lanyards - Lifelines <p>PPE also includes eye protection, hearing protection and other equipment designed to protect the head, face, and extremities.</p> <p>All equipment should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations for use.</p>

Anchors	Anchor points should be above the highest anticipated work area.												
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Anchor Type</th> <th>Kilonewtons</th> <th>Pounds</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fall Arrest (belay bar, structure)</td> <td>22.2kN</td> <td>5000 lbs.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rescue (Lead Anchor, Belay Bar, structure)</td> <td>13.3 kN</td> <td>3000 lbs.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Suspension (Lead Anchor, Belay Bar, structure)</td> <td>13.3 kN</td> <td>3000 lbs.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Anchor Type	Kilonewtons	Pounds	Fall Arrest (belay bar, structure)	22.2kN	5000 lbs.	Rescue (Lead Anchor, Belay Bar, structure)	13.3 kN	3000 lbs.	Suspension (Lead Anchor, Belay Bar, structure)	13.3 kN	3000 lbs.
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Positioning systems	Positioning and progress systems may be used where a worker needs to be hands free. A separate system will be used for fall protection.												
Assisted Braking devices	If using an ABD, it is necessary to implement a catastrophic knot to prevent the release of the rope through the device while in suspension.												
Fall Arrest System	A fall arrest system should be in place when working at height in accordance with local regulatory requirements where a free fall exceeding 2 feet in USA or 0.6 meters in Canada may occur.												
Fall Arrest Harness	The use of a fall arrest harness is recommended when working with a fall arrest system. Ensure correct attachment of the fall arrest system to harness following manufacturer's recommendations.												
Helmet	A climbing helmet is not adequate for use when working at height. A helmet which meets ANSI Z89.1, CSA Z94.1, EN 12492, EN 397 is acceptable.												
Route Forerunning	Forerunning routes may be conducted as climbing activities are typically treated with climbing equipment.												
Rescues	Workers shall be trained in the rescue procedures, consistent with their role as prescribed by the employer. Employers are responsible for training staff to conduct rescues and enact an emergency action plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision for prompt rescues - Provisions for self-rescue - Assisted rescue 												

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rescue by emergency services - Rescue contact begins as soon as possible, but no later than within 6 minutes of fall - Back side of the wall should be considered a restricted space. Special considerations may need to be implemented.
Lifts	Workers on a mobile elevated work platform or lift must use the platform in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and local regulatory requirements.

NOTE: Employees should have awareness and training for any specific facility Emergency Action plan, and rescue plan.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND RENEWAL

Certifications expire after a three-year period. Renewal of certification can occur in the following ways:

- Retake the WAH certification process in its entirety
- Participate in the WAH renewal course

Continued professional development and practice is recommended for certified Work at Height technicians. However, practical skills review by a certified WAH Provider or Provider Trainer is required to maintain certification.

RELATED DOCUMENTS, FORMS, AND TOOLS

- The CWA Industry Practices
- The WAH Student Manuals – Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3
- The CWA Certification Program Policy Manual
- The CWA WAH Provider Program Manual
- WAH Standard
- Activity Planning Tool
- WAH Assessment Tools for each level of certification

PRS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STANDARD

Responsible Position: CWA

Date Created: 2024

Date Last Revised: February 2024

STATEMENT OF STANDARD

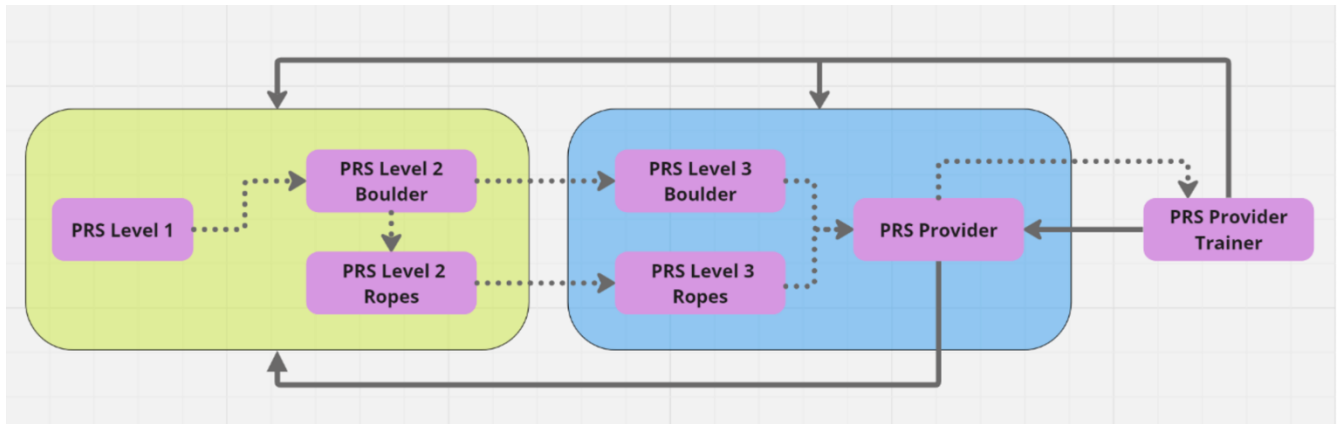
The **mission** of the PRS Certification Program is to:

- Create and maintain quality guidelines, training programs, and resources.
- Monitor and share industry information, trends, and progress.
- Educate climbing facilities on the value of certification and training for routesetters and the contributions and professionalism of routesetters.

The scope of the PRS Program Standard is climbing facility routesetting practices and skills. Specifically, the scope includes the following areas:

- Impart knowledge routesetters need to provide quality product
- Industry Practices for indoor climbing facilities
- Use of PPE appropriate for routesetting
- Risk Management principles in route design and construction
- The role of routesetters within the scope of climbing facility operations

PROFESSIONAL ROUTESSETTING (PRS) CERTIFICATION PATHWAY



Key to the Graphic

- The dotted line represents the certification required as a prerequisite to the next certification.
- The solid line represents who does the training for the certification level.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

PRS Introduction to Routesetting

All prospective candidates are eligible to complete the CWA Introduction to Routesetting through the CWA website.

PRS Level 1 Certified

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
- Ability to demonstrate and understand climbing movement up to V2
- Can lift 50 pounds (25 kg)
- Complete CWA Introduction to Routesetting
- Willing and able to work on a ladder

Recommended: 50 hours of setting experience, but not required.

PRS Level 2 Boulder

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older

- Ability to demonstrate and understand climbing movement up to V4
- Completed PRS Level 1

150 hours of setting experience suggested, but not required.

PRS Level 2 Ropes

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
- Completed PRS Level 2 boulder
- Ability to demonstrate and understand climbing movement up to 5.10
- WAH Level 1 (or concurrently enrolled)

150 hours of setting experience suggested, but not required.

PRS Level 3 Boulder

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
- Ability to demonstrate and understand climbing movement up to V4
- Have completed PRS Level 2 Boulder
- 600 hours of setting experience

PRS Level 3 Ropes

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older
- Ability to demonstrate and understand climbing movement up to 5.10
- Have completed PRS Level 2 Ropes
- WAH Level 2
- 600 hours of setting experience

PRS Providers

- Applicants must be 21 years of age or older
- Ability to demonstrate and understand climbing movement up to V4-V6 and 5.10-5.12
- PRS Providers have completed and are certified CWA PRS Level 3 Boulder and Ropes
- WAH Level 2
- First Aid certification from a course of 5.5-6 hours
- 2000 hours of setting experience with instructional or management experience

PRS Provider Trainers

- Assess alternative pathway and/or reciprocity requests for prospective CWI candidates.
- Maintain regular attendance at CWA PRS Certification Standards Committee meetings.
- Work in collaboration with the Certification Standards Committee members reporting any challenges, concerns with content, content delivery and course logistics.
- Abide by the rules governing certification outlined in the CWA Certification Program Policy Manual.
- Offer PRS and PRS Provider certification courses and assessments.
- Complete the certification course administration requirements for candidates in the certification program.
- Review resources and tools, develop resources and/or deliver instruction and assessment for prospective PRS programs and offerings.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The common responsibilities of those involved in the PRS Certification program are outlined below:

- Act in accordance with the certification's scope.
- Maintain the requirements of certification as outlined in the Certification Program Policy Manual.
- Comply with PRS Certification Standard practices as outlined in the student manual and the CWA Routesetting Guide.
- Use equipment that meets the CWA Certification Standard for setting activities.
- Cultivate a setting environment that reinforces risk management, trust, and learning.
- Use WAH appropriate practices when setting.

PRS Introduction to Routesetting

- Obtain practical routesetting experience.

PRS Level 1

- Work on a setting team under direct supervision.

PRS Level 2 Boulder

- Use appropriate communication skills with stakeholders (clients, facility employees, owners, operators).
- Demonstrate sound judgement and follow risk management strategies.
- Work on a setting team.
- Participate in forerunning on boulders.

PRS Level 2 Rope

- Use appropriate communication skills among the stakeholders (clients, facility employees, owners, operators).
- Demonstrate sound judgement and follow risk management strategies.
- Work on a setting team.
- Participate in forerunning on roped routes.

PRS Level 3 Boulder

- Use appropriate communication skills among the stakeholders (clients, facility employees, owners, operators).
- Demonstrate sound judgement and implement risk management strategies
- Supervise a team setting bouldering routes.
- Participate in forerunning on boulders.
- Prepared for apprenticeship as a head routesetter for a bouldering facility.

PRS Level 3 Rope

- Use appropriate communication skills among the stakeholders (clients, facility employees, owners, operators).
- Demonstrate sound judgement and implement risk management strategies.
- Supervise a team setting roped routes.
- Participate in forerunning on roped routes.
- Prepared for apprenticeship as a head routesetter.

PRS Providers

- Enroll prospective PRS Level 1, 2 and/or 3 candidates in the online learning course.
- Pay the course fee on behalf of the candidates required at the time of enrollment.
- Answer questions PRD candidates may have regarding online content.
- Clearly communicate and manage the course logistics.
- Conduct assessment of prospective PRS Level 1 and 2 certificants.
- Deliver activities allowing PRS Level 1 and 2 registrants to demonstrate they can meet or exceed the minimum standard for certification.
- Record the results of assessment in the online learning course assessment tool, along with any personal notes regarding the course delivery. Personal notes may help the Certification committee and/or the CWA in reviewing the certification decision if a review is required.
- Abide by the rules governing certification outlined in the CWA Certification Program Policy Manual.

PRS Provider Trainers

- Confer certification to PRS Certification Standards candidates meeting the minimum certification standards.
- Complete the certification course administration requirements for candidates in the certification program.
- Maintain regular attendance at CWA PRS Certification Standards Committee meetings.
- Use the CWA provided assessment criteria when reviewing candidates for PRS Level 3 Ropes, Boulder and Provider certification.
- Work with the CWA in the course delivery and documenting the assessment results of the registered candidates.
- Work in collaboration with the Certification Standards Committee members reporting any challenges, concerns with content, content delivery and course logistics.
- Abide by the rules governing certification outlined in the CWA Certification Program Policy Manual.

ROUTESETTING PROGRAM CERTIFICATION

The Routesetting Standards can be found within the Routesetting Guide. This document can be found on the CWA website.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND RENEWAL

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RELATED DOCUMENTS, FORMS, AND TOOLS

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- The CWA Certification Program Policy Manual
- The CWA PRS Provider Program Manual
- PRS Routesetting Guide
- Activity Planning Tool
- PRS Assessment Tools for each level of certification

NOTE: Employees should have awareness and training for any specific facility Emergency Action plan



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