

Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre

Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment

Activity Details

CARA Creation Date: 11-Feb-2025			
Activity:	Challenge Low Ropes & Group Activities		
Activity Scope:	This guideline is provided to support schools in implementing the Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure. The CARA planner must be used for the specific school context in conjunction with this guideline considering additional risks, hazards and controls and including environmental, facility, equipment and student considerations. For activities beyond the scope of this guideline, complete a CARA record using the CARA generic template. This guideline relates to student participation in low ropes courses and group challenge activities to support curriculum delivery. Low ropes activities refer to any activity that requires an individual or pair to complete an element conducted on a purpose-built facility for which the appropriate safety is achieved through safe and effective spotting. Group activities refers to any activity undertaken by a small to large group conducted on a purpose-built facility for which the appropriate safety is achieved through safe and effective spotting or adult supervisor directed dismount. Where the participant's safety can no longer be achieved by spotting, refer to Challenge high ropes guideline. Depending on the scope of this activity, other risk assessments may be required when planning. Curriculum activities encompassing more than one CARA guideline (e.g. Challenge low ropes and group activities while Camping) must comply with the requirements of all CARA guidelines appropriate to the activity. Schools should consider conducting this activity at a Department of Education Outdoor and Environmental Education Centre (O&EEC) and consult with O&EEC centre staff for risk assessment requirements. For activities conducted at a non-Department of Education venue, and/or when engaging external expertise, request written risk assessment advice and attach it to this CARA record. For activities conducted off-site, schools must comply with the School excursions and International school study tours procedure.		
Guidelines:	https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling/CARA/activity-guidelines		
Activity Description:	Student participation in: Low Ropes Courses, Group Challenge Adventure Course and Teamwork games. Small groups of students complete a number of different challenges. Each group always has an adult supervisor.		
Inherent Risk Level:	Medium		
Inherent Risk Level Description:	Low ropes and group activities conducted at a purpose-built facility for which the appropriate safety is achieved through safe and effective spotting.		
Start Date:	Wednesday, 01 January, 2025	End Date:	Wednesday, 31 December, 2025
On School Grounds:	Yes	Is parental permission required for this activity?	No

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Activity Requirements

Reference to [Australian Adventure Activity Standard](#), [Challenge Courses Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide](#) is required when planning this activity.

Permission/permits are required to be obtained from land managers (e.g. [QGPF](#), local councils or private landholders), if applicable.

Assessment and management of risks associated with [working at heights](#) must occur

Inspection and maintenance of the ropes course must comply with [AS2316.2.2:2016](#) Artificial climbing structures and challenge courses Flying foxes and challenge ropes courses – Operation requirements

Routine visual checks must be carried out by the adult supervisor leading the activity before each use of the course to ensure there is no obvious damage; the site is safe and; the integrity of the safety systems.

Operational inspection must be carried out by an adult supervisor who has a statement of attainment from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) covering [SISOCHC005](#) Manage challenge course or similar every 3 months, or as indicated in the manufacturer's instruction, to confirm no damage or degradation.

Periodic inspection must be carried out at least once every year by an independent certified inspection body (e.g. registered builder of challenge ropes courses) and to include routine visual check; operational inspection; assessment of worn components; and where the inspector deems necessary dismantling of parts; excavation to reveal condition of items underground and/or routine proof testing.

If challenge ropes course is built in trees, the trees must be inspected by a competent person annually or as advised by the manufacturer of the ropes course.

Records and/or certification of inspections must be made available to participating schools.

Students

Schools must consider age, maturity and skill level of students when planning curriculum activities. Adjustments are required for [students with disability](#) to support access and participation in the curriculum. Consult with the parents/carers of students with disability, or when appropriate the student, to ensure risks related to their child's participation in the activity are identified and managed.

Schools must consult current student medical information and/or health plans in accordance with the [Managing students' health support needs at school](#) procedure. Record information about any student condition (e.g. physical or medical) that may inhibit safe engagement in the activity and include specific support measures within emergency procedures.

Emergency and first-aid

Emergency plans and injury management procedures must be established for foreseeable incidents (e.g. evacuations procedure, [snake bites](#)).

Adult supervisors must have:

- emergency contact details of all participants;
- a medical alert list and a process for administering student medication;
- communication equipment suitable to conditions (e.g. two-way radio, mobile phone) and a process for obtaining external assistance and/or receiving emergency advice. Note that battery life can be impacted by weather conditions;
- recovery/rescue equipment suitable to the location (e.g. emergency position-indicating radio beacon [EPIRB] or personal locator beacon [PLB], flares);
- an appointed emergency contact (e.g. the Principal, a park ranger, or local police) who is provided with a route card listing activity details (outline of the route to be followed, the number and names of the party, the estimated time of departure/arrival;
- emergency shelter/protection locations and alternative routes that consider foreseeable emergencies (e.g. injury, bushfire, thunderstorm, extreme temperature, tides).

Safety procedures must be determined for the location (e.g. out-of-bounds areas, location of first aid support

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and equipment). Access is required to First aid equipment and consumables suitable for foreseeable incidents. An adult with current emergency qualifications is required to be quickly accessible to the activity area. Emergency qualifications include: • HLTAID009 Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); • HLTAID010 Provide basic emergency life support; • HLTAID011 Provide first aid; • HLTAID013 Provide first aid in remote situations; • or equivalent competencies. Induction and instruction Induction is required for all adult supervisors on emergency procedures (e.g. rescue from height) and safety procedures (e.g. out of bounds areas, roll marking). If the activity is conducted at an off-site facility, induction is to be informed by advice provided in consultation with expertise at the venue. Instruction is required for students and adult supervisors on correct techniques (e.g. spotting, correct use of equipment). Consent Parent consent is required for all activities conducted off-site.	
The activity requirements have been met and any additional requirements for the activity are included below or attached.	☒
Detailed risk management guidelines for this activity are outlined in the Tinaroo EEC Standard Operating Procedures for Challenge Low Ropes and Group Activities. Additional equipment and staff are occasionally employed with students with special needs. The exact modifications to this activity are dependent on the precise requirements of the student concerned	

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Risk Management Details

Supervision	
Due to the risk associated with falls from height, spotters must be used in order to protect the participant's upper body and head from heavy contact with the ground. Spotters are required when the feet of the participant are up to 1.8m above the ground (Australian Standard AS 2316.2.1:2016). If participant's feet are over 1.8m above the ground refer to the Challenge high ropes guideline.	☒
For activities with students with a medical condition or disability that may impact on safety during the activity, consultation with parents is required prior to allocating supervision to determine the impact of students' medical condition or disability on safety during the activity.	☒
The number of adult supervisors required to fulfil emergency and supervision roles must consider the nature of the activity, students' ages, abilities and specialised learning, access and/or health needs. The Challenge Courses Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide should be consulted for supervision ratios.	☒
Before the activity, all adult supervisors: - must be familiar with the contents of the CARA record - must assess weather conditions, and obtain accurate information on tides, depths, currents and other expected water conditions (if applicable) prior to undertaking the activity, inspecting the intended location in order to identify variable risks, hazards and potential dangers.	☒
During the activity, all adult supervisors: - must be readily identifiable - must closely monitor students with health support needs - must closely monitor all students, removing participants for the safety of the group or individuals, if applicable - must comply with control measures from the CARA record and adapt as hazards arise - must suspend the activity if the conditions become unfavourable (e.g. poor visibility, extreme temperatures, thunderstorms).	☒
All instructors are Tinaroo EEC registered teachers who have been assessed as competent to lead the sessions. At least two adults will be present. A different supervision ratio may be determined for wilderness programs involving disengaged youth. The ratio will be established through a risk management process	

Supervisor Qualifications	
All adult supervisors must comply with the Workingwith Children Authority - Blue Cards procedure and be able to identify, and respond to, risks or hazards that may emerge during the activity.	☒
A registered teacher must be appointed to maintain overall responsibility for the activity.	☒
At least one adult supervisor is required to be:	
A registered teacher with competence (knowledge and skills) and experience in leading challenge low ropes activities.	☒
OR	

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An adult supervisor, working under the direct supervision of a registered teacher, with qualifications SISOCHC001 - Lead challenge course sessions, low elements or similar.	☐
Refer to the Challenge Courses Australian Adventure Activity Good Practice Guide and SIS - Sport, Fitness and Recreation Training Package for further information on supervisor qualifications.	
All instructors are Tinaroo EEC registered teachers who have been assessed as competent to lead sessions through TEEC staff induction, an annual validation process, and Statements of Attainment.	

Facilities and Equipment	
Location must be suitable for the activity being undertaken. Undertake a reconnaissance of new or infrequently used locations to ascertain suitability.	☒
Equipment must be sized to match the ability and strength of students.	☒
All equipment must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.	☒
A process for checking for damage for all equipment used in the activity must be established and employed.	☒
A log of equipment use, maintenance and inspection for each course must be kept and made available to participating schools upon request.	☒
Equipment (e.g. harnesses, helmets, ropes, lanyards) must be retired by manufacturer's nominated expiry date or when significant wear appears that could impact the safety of the participant. A retirement of equipment policy developed.	☒
Procedures and systems used should be consistent throughout the challenge course activity session.	☒
Participants must wear Personal protective equipment as relevant (e.g. firmly fitting enclosed non-slip footwear, clothing appropriate to activity and weather conditions).	☒
Where a spotter cannot effectively reach mid-torso of the climber, participants must wear secured and correctly fitted helmets compliant with International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation (UIAA) , European Community (CE) standard or equivalent (refer to UIAA safety standards for more information) for the duration of the activity. If helmets are worn they must be secured and correctly fitted for the duration of the activity and must meet Australian Standards.	☒
If the feet of the participant are above 1.8m, additional fall protection must be applied.	☒
If privately owned equipment is being used, Principal approval and owner consent/insurance details must be obtained prior to the activity.	☐
All equipment has a scheduled service life and is tracked through a database from purchase to disposal. Additional controls are put in place when no vehicle access to a site. Detailed risk management guidelines for this activity are outlined in the Tinaroo EEC Standard Operating Procedures.	

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Hazards and Control Measures	
Further to those listed, include any additional hazards and control measures considering the local context of the activity.	
Animal bites - stings, infection	
Adhere to established practices regarding the use of insect repellent, outlined in Insect viruses and allergies .	☒
Brief all participants on basic first aid procedures for biological hazards they may encounter (e.g. snakes , ticks, leeches).	☒
Environmental conditions - weather, surrounds, surfaces	
The school's sun safety strategy must be followed.	☒
Follow the Managing excessive heat in schools guidelines when participating in very hot or extreme heat conditions.	☒
Monitor participants for cold related illness (e.g. hypothermia) in cold weather conditions.	☒
Ensure drink breaks occur regularly. Make water available for individual participants between drink breaks.	☒
Faulty or dangerous equipment	
Check equipment prior to the start of each session. Pay particular attention to fastening systems when removable rope systems are used.	☒
Injury	
Students aware of the location of emergency and first-aid equipment.	☒
Physical exertion - exhaustion and fatigue	
Continuously monitor students for signs of fear, hesitancy, loss of balance, fatigue, disorientation and/or exhaustion.	☒
Adopt system of signals to clearly communicate the need for assistance if in difficulty.	☒
Student issues	
Conduct appropriate lead-up activities (e.g. trust, cooperation, communication).	☒
Provide suitable options to allow 'challenge by choice'.	☒
Provide scaffolded experiences to build participant skill level, knowledge and experience.	☒
Guide students through an activity or provide a demonstration prior to undertaking the activity.	☒

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Use trained, competent spotters.	☒
Remove accessories (e.g. jewellery, lanyards) before participating.	☒
Ensure fingernails and hair do not pose a hazard.	☒
Implement procedures (e.g. buddy system, roll marking mechanisms) to account for all participants.	☒
Visibility	
Ensure staff can easily recognise those students with health support needs and are familiar with their needs.	☒
Additional links Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation	
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Staff/Other Participants			
Family Name	Given Name	Type	Other Participants Role
Crosby	Bret	Staff Member	N/A
Dilger	Darryl	Staff Member	N/A
Dove	Rochelle	Staff Member	N/A
Harrison	Philip	Staff Member	N/A
Hinchliffe	Alexander	Staff Member	N/A
Morley	Kirk	Staff Member	N/A
Watson	Dayna	Staff Member	N/A
cinelli	Alex	Other Participant	

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Planning Considerations

Which students will be involved?

- Consider the number of students, size of student groups and students' capabilities e.g. age, experience, competence, fitness, maturity.
- Consider any individual student needs e.g. personalised learning, support provisions (including behaviour support plans), health management (including health plans and prescribed medication requirements).

Where will the students be?

- Consider the location of the activity e.g. remote/easily accessible, public /private, school/classroom/workshop/other.
- Is the number of students appropriate for the available space?
- If outdoors – sunsafe strategies are implemented; weather and environmental conditions are assessed before and during activity (e.g. temperature, storms, water currents, tides); and strategies to reduce the likelihood of viruses, allergies and skin infections caused by insects (e.g. ticks, mosquitoes, spiders) and other animals are applied.
- The site is checked for hazards (e.g. poisonous plants, dangerous animals, uneven terrain, barbed wire,) and necessary controls implemented.
- Activities are appropriately situated in relation to buildings, pedestrians, members of the public, vehicles and other activities e.g. designated areas for activity, spectators and vehicles are established.

What will the students be doing?

- Consider the nature and duration of the activity i.e. need for drinking water, food, rest, appropriate clothing, warm-up and warm-down.
- Instruction in rules and pre-requisite skills is provided.
- Student skills are developed in a progressive and sequential manner.
- First aid and emergency medical treatment provisions are appropriate for the type of activity and location e.g. first aid kit, first aid trained personnel, Ventolin®, Epipen®, and students' personal prescribed medications as required in health plans are available.
- Emergency response strategies are in place e.g. communication plans (e.g. mobile phone, walkie talkie), safety induction, evacuation plans.
- Hair, clothing, footwear and jewellery are worn in a manner that is appropriate and safe for the activity.
- Personal items, e.g. drink bottles, towels and mouthguards, will not be shared between students.

What will the students be using?

- Instruction in safety procedures and safe handling of equipment is provided.
- Equipment is suitable for the activity, properly maintained, appropriately used and complies with the relevant safety standard.
- [Relevant department procedures and guidelines](#) are adhered to for the use of equipment and work processes.

Who will be leading the activity?

- A registered teacher has overall responsibility for the activity.
- Sufficient adult supervision is in place to manage the activity safely (including in emergency situations).
- The activity leader has the competence (knowledge and skills) to plan, induct, instruct and manage the activity safely for students and others.
- There are sufficient adults present with current First Aid qualifications (including CPR) or ready access to qualified first aid personnel.
- Blue Card requirements are adhered to for leaders/volunteers.

☒ I have incorporated the above factors when planning my risk management strategies for this activity.

☒ Additional activity-specific requirements for students with specialised learning needs are provided in the Other Details box below.

Detailed risk management guidelines for this activity are outlined in the Tinaroo EEC Standard Operating Procedures for Challenge Low Ropes & Group Activities.

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Monitor and Review

Informal review will take place before during and after each Challenge Low Ropes and Group Activities activity. Annual review of CARA will take place either at the end of a School Year, or the start of the following year