

Candidate Name: _____

Date: _____

MINIMAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT PRACTICES

EXAM ANSWERS

This exam is designed to meet the knowledge requirements of the following units of competency:
SROOPS001B – Implement minimal environmental impact practices; and
SROOPS002B – Plan for minimal environmental impact.

Write your answers in permanent ink.

Competency is demonstrated by students who initially score 15/15

Useful internet resources:

<http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/recreation/walking>

<http://www.australionalps.deh.gov.au/publications/trace/index.html>

<http://www.epa.qld.gov.au>

<http://www.ntis.gov.au> (search for Training Package SRO03 – Outdoor Recreation)

Q1. You are walking along a track with several others. The track you are following is becoming increasingly faint. Eventually, the track fades out. Choose the response that you believe is the correct course of action to take:

- a) Form a single file with everyone in your group and simply follow each others footsteps and continue directly on from where the track last faded out.
- b) Just make a new track and go in whatever direction is the shortest route to your destination.
- c) Spread out so you don't follow in each others footsteps and travel in the most obvious direction to reach your destination.
- d) None of the above are correct.

Explain your answer: Avoid following each other in single file – a plant species might survive one persons steps but not multiple people. Spreading out also disperses the damage.

Q2. You are trying to reach a destination on foot by bushwalking. There is an old partly overgrown track but you realise that there is a shorter more direct path to get to your destination. Choose the response that you believe is the best course of action:

- a) Make a new direct track and mark it so others can follow in the future.
- b) Stick to the original track and follow it.
- c) Follow the original track but widen it and clear some vegetation as needed to make really easy for others in the future.
- d) None of the above are correct.

Explain your answer: Cutting new tracks just increases impact. It will be confusing to others who will wander around trying to follow multiple tracks.

- Q3. You are planning to visit three cliffs in your local region. Due to the growing popularity of the sport of climbing and abseiling, you are concerned about potential crowding and/or conflicts with other user groups. Provide answers where indicated below:

•Name of your local cliff 1: *Castle Hill*

Level of regular usage by local climbers or other user groups:

- Rarely used or visited by others
 Low usage
 Regular usage on weekends
 High levels of usage including midweek and weekends

Risk of interference or conflict with other user groups

- no risk of conflict or interference from others
 low risk of conflict / interference but could easily be negotiated
 conflict and/or interference with others is only likely on weekends
 conflict and/or interference with others is likely at any time of the week

Amount and variety of routes at local cliff

- not many beginner level climbing routes at cliff
 limited selection of beginner routes concentrated in one section of cliff
 plenty of routes to suit all levels of ability

•Name of your local cliff 2: *Mt Stuart*

Level of regular usage by local climbers or other user groups:

- Rarely used or visited by others
 Low usage
 Regular usage on weekends
 High levels of usage including midweek and weekends

Risk of interference or conflict with other user groups

- no risk of conflict or interference from others
 low risk of conflict / interference but could easily be negotiated
 conflict and/or interference with others is only likely on weekends
 conflict and/or interference with others is likely at any time of the week

Amount and variety of routes at local cliff

- not many beginner level climbing routes at cliff
 limited selection of beginner routes concentrated in one section of cliff
 plenty of routes to suit all levels of ability

•Name of your local cliff 3: *Fredericks Peak*

Level of regular usage by local climbers or other user groups:

- Rarely used or visited by others
 Low usage
 Regular usage on weekends
 High levels of usage including midweek and weekends

Risk of interference or conflict with other user groups

- no risk of conflict or interference from others
 low risk of conflict / interference but could easily be negotiated
 moderate risk of conflict / interference
 conflict and/or interference with others is only likely on weekends
 conflict and/or interference with others is likely at any time of the week

Amount and variety of routes at local cliff

- not many beginner level climbing routes at cliff
 limited selection of beginner routes concentrated in one section of cliff
 plenty of routes to suit all levels of ability

- Q4. You are planning to go climbing and abseiling. There is a track to your destination but it is wet and muddy. Choose the response that you believe is the best course of action:
- a) Make a new track so you can avoid getting muddy, wet shoes.
 - b) Stick to the original track and follow it, no matter how wet and muddy.
 - c) Follow the original track but widen it so you can avoid getting muddy, wet shoes.
 - d) None of the above are correct.
- Q5. You need to go to the toilet, but you realise there are no toilets at any of the climbing and abseiling areas you are visiting. Choose the response that you believe is the best course of action:
- a) Just go behind the nearest tree – don't worry about burying any waste, its best to leave it on the surface so the sun, wind and rain can 'break it down'.
 - b) Walk at least 100m away from any campsite, walking track or where people climb then bury any waste at least 15cm (150mm) deep.
 - c) It doesn't matter where you do to the toilet – it will all 'break down' anyway after a period of time.
 - d) None of the above are correct.
- Q6. The following question relates to a general rule for caring for our natural outdoor environments.
- Complete the sentence:
- "If you can carry it in, you should carry it out."*
- Q7. You are planning to abseil at a local cliff. When you arrive at the cliff you realise that there is nowhere to anchor your ropes. You are faced with some choices about how to setup anchors:
- a) Forcibly hammer in some metal spikes into cracks in rock to create some anchors.
 - b) Use a cordless hammer drill to install some permanent bolt anchors.
 - c) Learn non-destructive methods of setting up anchors.

Explain your answer: *Cordless drills and metal spikes all cause permanent damage to the rock. Many climbing areas also have strict local ethics – eg bolt-free zones. Bolting is prohibited in National parks.*

- Q8. TRUE or FALSE

Loose rock (including large loose boulders) should always be removed and dropped to the ground where-ever it is found at climbing and abseiling sites. The impact to the cliff and the environment at the base of the cliff is insignificant.

True False

Explain your answer: *Rockfall can cause extensive damage within the impact zone. The act of removing loose rock also alters the character of the cliff. There is also the risk to the public who may be below.*

- Q9. You plan to spend the entire day at the cliff. As part of your lunch, you plan to boil some water for soup and coffee. Choose the response you believe is best solution for obtaining hot water.
- a) Start a camp fire – this will enable you to heat some water.
 - b) Use a portable cooking stove.
 - c) Avoid any form of fire – the use of flame or fire in any outdoor area is prohibited in Australia.
 - d) None of the above.

Explain your answer: There is less risk of causing a fire with portable cooking stoves. Some areas prohibit camp fires. Avoids the need to collect wood for the fire.

- Q10. Upon return to the carpark, you notice that your socks are covered in grass seeds (eg weeds and sharp 'bindis'). Choose the response you believe is best solution for dealing with the seeds.
- a) Remove the seeds before you drive home.
 - b) Have a friend pluck the seeds and drop them out of the car window while you're driving home.
 - c) Do nothing. Drive home and simply shake the seeds all over your front lawn and on the street.
 - d) None of the above.

Explain your answer: Noxious weeds cause significant harm to the environment. Some areas have Siam weed and other noxious weeds which if spread could cause significant harm. Each climber/abseiler is a potential seed carrier.

- Q11. You are planning to climb and abseil at your local cliff. When you arrive at your intended location you notice that tree branches and vegetation has overgrown the area. The vegetation has obscured some abseil routes and climbs on a section of the cliff. Describe your preferred course of action:
- a) Remove all the vegetation including the roots.
 - b) Choose alternative routes / locations and leave the vegetation alone.
 - c) Trim/prune the vegetation to enable the intended routes to be used.
 - d) Spray the vegetation with a chemical agent to kill it.
 - e) Consult with local climbers/abseilers and find out what the local rules and ethics are in regard to vegetation management.

- Q12. Virtually all Australian *Nature Conservation Acts* and *National Parks Regulations* include provisions for "Ecologically Sustainable Use" of areas. What is meant by this term? Explain your answer:

The use of the areas within their capacity to sustain natural processes while—

- (a) maintaining the life support systems of nature; and*
- (b) ensuring that the benefit of the use to present generations does not diminish the potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations.*

- Q13. You are planning to visit three different cliffs in your local region. Identify the authorities responsible for managing each cliff and determine any unique aspects about these cliffs that could be vulnerable to human impacts. Write your answers where indicated below:

●**Name of your local cliff 1:** Castle Hill

Name of authority responsible for managing cliff site 1? Townsville City Council

Describe unique aspects about cliff 1 which are potentially vulnerable to human impacts:

Popular walking track along bottom of cliffs which are in the direct fall line of loose debris dislodged by climbers. Large rocks/boulders that are dislodged could conceivably roll down the steep scree slopes and threaten housing below.

●**Name of your local cliff 2:** Mt Stuart

Name of authority responsible for managing cliff site 2? Townsville City Council

Describe unique aspects about cliff 1 which are potentially vulnerable to human impacts:

Rock Wallabies have declined in the popular 'Playground cliff' area – most likely due to frequent visitation by climbers – they may have moved to less frequented areas on the cliff. There is a unique species of flora located on the cliff along with many types of staghorns and orchards. A pair of Wedge tail eagles are frequently sighted as are Peregrine falcons.

●**Name of your local cliff 3:** Fredericks Peak

Name of authority responsible for managing cliff site 3? State of Qld – EPA (Qld National Parks)

Describe unique aspects about cliff 1 which are potentially vulnerable to human impacts:

Steep terrain with very limited campsites. Top soil is limited at these level ground areas and could easily be eroded by climbers over time. Tracks can only exist in limited areas due to the steep and loose ground. Tracks will become 'worn in' over time and some further erosion is possible along the base of the cliffs.

- Q14. List at least 3 things you can do to help achieve minimal environmental impact to your local climbing/abseiling cliff.

1. Stick to existing tracks and walk across solid rock wherever possible
2. Don't litter – carry out other litter that is lying about at the cliff
3. Don't dislodge loose rock or deliberately remove large boulders
4. Try to ensure bowel movement before driving up to Mt Stuart – limit human waste to urine – venture well clear of established tracks and cliffs
5. Avoid disturbing native animals
6. Don't clear vegetation just to make access a little easier for yourself

Q15. List at least 4 types of environmental impact that could occur as a result of your participation in climbing and abseiling activities at your local cliff:

1. Chalk marks on the rock (chalk is used to improve grip – like a gymnast)
2. Human fecal waste / urine
3. Frightening / discouraging local wildlife away from the area
4. Litter
5. Soil compaction
6. Widening of tracks
7. Dislodging loose rock

Final score _____

Student statement:

I declare that the answers I have provided represent my own work and not the work of someone else. I acknowledge that climbing and abseiling areas are a limited and fragile resource. I realise that my actions may in some cases have irreversible or long lasting implications to the environment. I also acknowledge that there are State/Territory laws and local regulations that govern how climbing and abseiling sites are managed, and that those laws and regulations must be complied with.

Student signature: _____

Date: _____