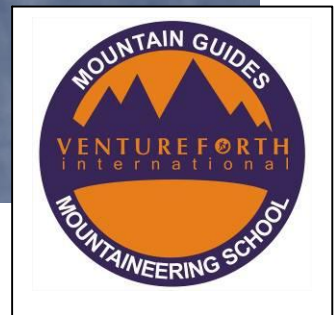


# Mountaineering School

Training & Assessment Courses Catalogue 2007 – 2008



**Recreational Training Courses**

**Professional Qualification Training Courses & Assessments**

**Mountaineering – Rock Climbing – Mountain Walking – Abseiling**

Accredited by:

SA Mountaineering Development & Training Trust (MDT)

National Qualifications (THETA)

Adventure Qualifications Network (AQN)



## Hi There!

Thank you for your interest in Venture Forth International and our Mountaineering School. We are very proud to be an accredited training and assessment centre for the SA Mountaineering Development & Training Trust (MDT) as well as the Tourism and Hospitality Sector Education & Training Authority (THETA), offering both MDT Awards and registered National Qualifications.

As one of the first commercial mountain guide services and mountaineering schools founded in South Africa we have the expertise and experience to help you with all your mountaineering training needs; from inspirational beginners courses to high level professional mountain guide qualifications. We're here to help.

We have a dedicated, motivated and friendly team of highly qualified instructors who would love to get into the mountains with you; regardless of your experience or capabilities. Our instructors are all dedicated mountaineers with many years of knowledge and experience to share. You can view all instructors' profiles on our [website](#).

Our climbing school is all about making better, safer mountaineers who are inspired to go out into the hills to explore and experience the mountains for themselves. Our training courses are learner-centred, friendly, non-competitive and great fun with the emphasis on each individual student's personal development of skills and experience within their own abilities.

Have a look through the catalogue; I'm sure you'll find plenty to interest you. Please feel free to [call](#) or [email](#) us with your questions or drop by the office for a chat. We will gladly set up an appointment to meet with you to discuss your personal requirements and give you the best advice.



VFI Aconcagua Expedition 2003 – VFI guides Ross Cowlin (far left) & Walther Meyer (far right)

We are always striving to improve our courses and our current selection of training programs have been designed based not only on the syllabi of our various accrediting bodies, but also on the many years of experience we have gained working with course students and listening closely to their valued feedback. So, if you have any comments to help us improve our programs and services, we'll gladly [hear](#) from you!

Now quickly read this and choose a course so we can get outdoors!

## Looking forward to seeing you in the hills

**Walther Meyer**

Director – Venture Forth

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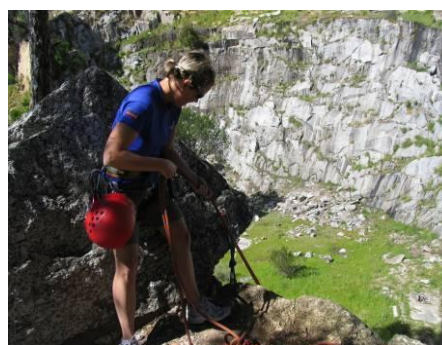
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## 1 VFI Mountaineering School Overview

Our climbing school is all about making better, safer mountaineers who are inspired to go out into the hills to explore and experience the mountains for themselves. Our training courses are learner-centred, friendly, non-competitive and great fun with the emphasis on each individual student's personal development of skills and experience within their own abilities. Our patient, friendly and experienced instructors love teaching mountain skills and introducing beginners to the exciting world of mountaineering.

Venture Forth offers various **recreational courses** suitable for beginners and more advanced climbers wanting to develop their skills. These courses will give you a solid, safe foundation to build your future climbing experience on. Mountain sports can be enjoyed by everyone and the correct training ensures a safer and more rewarding experience for all.

We are also an accredited training and assessment centre offering both SA Mountaineering Development & Training Trust (MDT) and THETA (National Qualifications) systems of **professional mountaineering qualifications**. Please visit the various course pages in this catalogue or on our website and then contact us to get the best advice for your personal career development. Also have a look at the [professional qualifications assessments](#) section to learn about assessments and how they take place.



## 2 Recreational Courses Overview

Climbing is fun! We love introducing new people to the sport and helping them to be safe, skilled climbers with a love for the mountains.

Climbing is for everyone! It is a misconception that climbing is only a sport for a few elite people. Almost anyone can start climbing and have fun. And if you don't get up the hard stuff at first, don't worry. The more you climb the better you will get at it. You don't have to be super fit or extraordinarily strong to start climbing. And you definitely don't need to be a stringy little stick figure to enjoy it.

Join us for one of our recreational courses and we will show you how to get going safely, how to climb up cliffs you once thought impossible and very importantly, how to have fun doing it!

Our courses are about you and teaching you how to climb. We don't want to scare you or impress you with what the instructor can climb, but rather focus on making you a safe, competent climber who wants to get out there at every opportunity to enjoy the mountains.

We would also love for every student to eventually progress to traditional ("trad") climbing and obtaining the "freedom of the hills" for themselves. To be able go out and explore, maybe climb new routes or, of course, just get out and have awesome adventures and great fun.

Venture Forth. We teach climbing, but we make mountaineers.

### Recreational Courses available from VFI:

- [Introduction to Sport Climbing course](#)
- [Introduction to Traditional Climbing course](#)
- [Traditional Climbing Leaders course](#)
- [Adventure Racing Rope Skills Competency course](#)

## Introduction to Sport Climbing course

Where most people start when taking up rock climbing: sport climbing routes are protected by pre-placed stainless steel bolts for protection and is less gear intensive, and thus more affordable to take up and far less overwhelming than traditional climbing to the novice.

### Who should do this course?

Any person wishing to take up rock climbing as a sport or any sport climber who needs a skills refresher.

The course is run at accessible venues with plenty of easy and moderate routes to practise your new skills on and we'll teach you everything you need to know to start sport climbing safely on your own with your friends.

**Topics covered include:** equipment, natural and bolted anchor set-ups, knots, single-pitch climbing, top-roping, abseiling, belaying, cleaning, route finding and guidebooks, lead climbing, climbing techniques, crag etiquette, safety and basic emergency procedures.

We'll supply all the equipment you need and give you plenty of toys to try out during the course so that you can make informed choices when you do decide to buy your own kit.

**Participant requirements:** The course is open to any reasonably healthy and physically capable person over the age of 16. Courses for younger participants can be arranged on request.

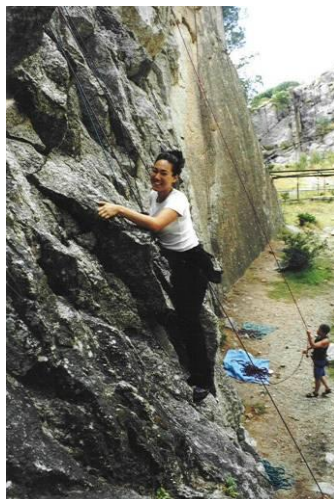
**Course duration & times:** 2 days  
Usually run on consecutive days over a weekend.  
Usually from 08:00 until approximately 16:00 depending on group size.

**Group size & ratios:** Minimum of three students required for course to run.  
Maximum of 8 students per course.  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 4 Students

**Equipment:** Venture Forth provides all equipment for this course. Students must only bring appropriate clothing, water and food for the day.

### Recommended follow-up programs:

- [MDT Top-Rope Supervisor Course](#)
- [MDT Abseil Supervisor Course](#)
- [Introduction to Traditional Climbing.](#)
- [Full day guided peninsula sport climbing.](#)



## Introduction to Traditional Climbing course

Traditional climbing refers to the climbing of routes using removable protection (such as “cams”, “nuts” etc.) to protect the climbers. This course is designed to teach students all that is required to be a competent “second”, to allow you to climb following a more experienced leader. The course is run at accessible traditional climbing venues and ends with an ascent of a classic multi-pitch route.

### Who should do this course?

Any climber wishing to progress from sport climbing to the adventurous world of traditional climbing.

**Topics covered include:** multi-pitch climbing, double rope technique, gear placement and removal, self-rescue, rope ascending, communication and mountain safety.

We'll supply all the equipment you need and give you plenty of toys to try out during the course so that you can make informed choices when you do decide to buy your own kit.

**Participant requirements:** The course is open to any reasonably healthy and physically capable person over the age of 16. Courses for younger participants can be arranged on request.

**Course duration & times:** 2 days  
Usually run on consecutive days over a weekend.  
Usually from 08:00 until approximately 16:00 depending on group size.

**Group size & ratios:** Minimum of three students required for course to run.  
Maximum of 8 students per course.  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 4 Students

**Equipment:** Venture Forth provides all equipment for this course. Students must only bring appropriate clothing, water and food for the day. We do encourage students to have their own personal equipment (harness, climbing shoes, helmet, belay device and HMS karabiner).

### Recommended follow-up programs:

- [MDT Top-Rope Supervisor Course](#)
- [MDT Abseil Supervisor Course](#)
- [Traditional Climbing Leaders Course.](#)
- [Full day guided traditional climbing.](#)



## 3 Recreational Courses

**Traditional Climbing Leader course**

Traditional climbing refers to the climbing of routes using removable protection (such as “cams”, “nuts” etc.) to protect the climbers. This is the course to do when you want to change from being a “second” or “follower” to being a leader. We teach you everything you need to know to start leading routes using traditional equipment as protection. You will have the opportunity to hone your skills, under supervision, on routes which are within your comfort zone.

**Who should do this course?**

Any climber wishing to progress from seconding on traditional routes to taking up the sharp end and leading their own climbs.

**Topics covered include:** equipment, leading fundamentals, anchoring principals, self-rescue, communication, route finding and climbing techniques.

We'll supply all the equipment you need and give you plenty of toys to try out during the course so that you can make informed choices when you do decide to buy your own kit.

**Participant requirements:** The course is open to any reasonably healthy and physically capable person over the age of 16. Courses for younger participants can be arranged on request.

**Course duration & times:** 4 days  
Usually run over two consecutive weekends.  
Usually from 08:00 until approximately 17:00 depending on group size.

**Group size & ratios:** Minimum of three students required for course to run.  
Maximum of 6 students per course.  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 3 Students

**Equipment:** Venture Forth provides all equipment for this course. Students must only bring appropriate clothing, water and food for the day. We do encourage students to have their own personal equipment (harness, climbing shoes, helmet, belay device and HMS karabiner).

**Recommended follow-up programs:**

- [MDT Single Pitch Supervisor Course.](#)
- [Full day guided traditional climbing.](#)



## Adventure Racing Rope Skills Competency course

Learn all the rope skills an adventure racer requires to move easily and with confidence across those rope protected obstacles you so frequently encounter. Adventure Race organisers require that participants hold a “rope skills competency certificate” before they are allowed to participate in a race. This course covers all the required skills and successful participants receive a certificate of competency from Venture Forth.

### Who should do this course?

Any adventure racer wishing to acquire the skills to race safely.

**Topics covered include:** personal abseiling & climbing techniques, basic rope ascending, knots, self-protection, equipment selection and care.

We'll supply all the equipment you need and give you plenty of toys to try out during the course so that you can make informed choices when you do decide to buy your own kit.

**Participant requirements:** The course is open to any reasonably healthy and physically capable person over the age of 16. Courses for younger participants can be arranged on request.

**Course duration & times:** 2 days  
Usually run over two consecutive days.  
Usually from 08:00 until approximately 15:00 depending on group size.

**Group size & ratios:** Minimum of three students required for course to run.  
Maximum of 8 students per course.  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 4 Students

**Equipment:** Venture Forth provides all equipment for this course. Students must only bring appropriate clothing, water and food for the day. We do encourage students to have their own personal equipment (harness, climbing shoes, helmet, belay device and HMS karabiner, prussic loops).

### Recommended follow-up programs:

- [MDT Abseil Supervisor Course.](#)
- [Sport Climbing Introductory Course.](#)



## 5 Professional Mountaineering Qualifications Overview

There are two systems of mountaineering qualifications available in South Africa. The first system, started in 1994, was the SA Mountaineering Development and Training Trust (MDT) which was based on the British Mountain Leader Training Board (MLTB) system. In 2000 the South African Government introduced the National Qualifications System and herein the commercial mountaineering industry resorts under the Tourism and Hospitality Sector Education and Training Authority (THETA).

It is important to understand that all Professional Qualifications are made up of two components.

- 1) Training Course
- 2) Assessment Course

Attending a training course only does not obtain you the Qualification or Award. You need to successfully complete assessment as well. Training Courses are priced separately from Assessment Courses. Please see the section on [Professional Qualifications Assessment](#) in this catalogue and on our [website](#).

### National Qualifications:

If you want to be a **commercial mountain guide** earning a living from guiding in the mountains of South Africa you need to obtain a **THETA qualification** as a mountain guide which will allow you to register with the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) as a **legal tourist guide**. This is the **ONLY** way you will be able to call yourself a legal, registered and qualified mountain guide in South Africa.

If you need a mountaineering qualification for non-commercial purposes like being a volunteer mountain leader for a church group, school or hiking club you only need to obtain a MDT award. Often MDT Awards are also suitable for outdoor educators, social workers, prison wardens and others who lead groups on the mountains for various reasons other than commercial guiding. Some of the MDT awards also carry international recognition. However, many volunteer leaders still prefer to also/rather obtain the appropriate National Qualification.

In order to register as a mountain guide you need a **minimum of a THETA accredited Skills Program Certificate**. The skills program is made up of two components:

- 1) Core Units (generic tourism unit standards)
- 2) Elective Units (selected, appropriate mountaineering unit standards)

Currently there are 8 mountaineering electives to choose from:

<u>USD#</u>	<u>Unit Standard Title</u>
TG19	Create a guided mountaineering experience in a limited geographical area
TG20	Create a guided abseiling experience of less than 60 meters
TG21	Create a guided abseiling experience of more than 60 meters but less than 150 meters
TG22	Create a guided single-pitch rock climbing experience
TG23	Create a guided rock climbing experience
TG24	Create a guided canyoneering experience
TG25	Create a guided mountain walking experience
TG26	Create a guided mountaineering experience

The above Unit Standards can be downloaded from the Venture Forth website at <http://www.ventureforth.co.za/resources> or drop us an email and we'll send them to you. They are also available on the THETA website at [www.theta.org.za](http://www.theta.org.za) – but we've made it easy for you, so why look any further?

Along with your chosen mountaineering elective you will need the the following Core Unit Standards to complete your Skills Program Certificate:

<u>USD#</u>	<u>Unit Standard Title</u>
TG01	Create a guided experience for customers (for NQF level 2 qualifications)

Or all three of the following for NQF level 4 qualifications

TG02	Conduct a guided experience with customers
TG03	Design a guided experience for customers
TG04	Interpret guiding for tourists

So, to recap:

**CORE UNITS + ELECTIVE UNITS = SKILLS PROGRAM CERTIFICATE**  
**+**  
**A valid first-aid certificate**  
**=**  
**Register as a qualified MOUNTAIN GUIDE**

### MDT Awards:

The MDT system offers the following 9 awards:

#### **Rock Climbing Awards**

- 1) Top-Rope Supervisor
- 2) Abseil Supervisor (level 1 & 2)
- 3) Single-Pitch Supervisor
- 4) Rock Climbing Leader
- 5) Rock Climbing Instructor

#### **Mountain Walking Awards**

- 1) Basic Mountain Walking Leade
- 2) Advanced Mountain Walking Leader
- 3) Mountain Walking Instructor

#### **Mountaineering Awards**

- 1) Mountaineering Instructor

To obtain the Mountain Walking Instructor Award you need to hold all the Mountain Walking Awards as well as the Single-Pitch Supervisor Award. To obtain the Rock Climbing Instructor Award you need to hold all the Rock Climbing Awards as well as the Advanced Mountain Walking Leader Award. If you wish to obtain the Mountaineering Instructor Award you need to hold both the lower level Instructor Awards first.

MDT Awards are valid for 3 years from certification subject to the award holder also holding a valid first-aid certificate at all times. After the 3 years you can have your certificate renewed by having your logbook of experience assessed.

The MDT's Rock Climbing Instructor and Advanced Mountain Walking Leader Awards are recognised internationally by the UIAA (world governing body for mountaineering).

Holding a MDT Award does not qualify you as a Mountain Guide in South Africa and you cannot use a MDT Award certificate to register with DEAT as a tourist guide. The MDT does however have wide recognition within the adventure industry.

The National Qualifications have been based on the MDT Awards and thus attending a MDT approved training course is still recommended as preparation for National Qualification assessment.

### What does Venture Forth offer?

At Venture Forth we run courses that cover the MDT Syllabus, and additional skills to better equip you for the mountain. Our courses are recognised by the MDT and when you complete a Professional Qualification Course with Venture Forth you will automatically be registered with the MDT as a candidate (learner). The syllabi of our Professional Qualification Courses have been extended to include the additional knowledge required to successfully complete assessment for the matching National Qualification. Many of our students choose to do both MDT and National Qualifications assessment simultaneously.

Training and assessment courses are organised and priced separately. Please see the [information on assessments in this catalogue](#) or on our website and consult with us regarding the best program for you based on your experience and ambitions.

Taken from the MDT website, [www.mdt.za.org](http://www.mdt.za.org), to give you another perspective.

## 5. MDT or National Qualification – what to choose...

Back in 1994, Stakeholders in the mountaineering industry got together to develop a training and assessment programme to meet the needs of the mountaineering industry as there was nothing in place at that time to ensure what was being taught was correct and relevant. In 2000 the National Qualifications Framework was established and qualifications were developed and registered with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) with whom all qualifications in SA are registered.

The SAQA qualifications are work based qualifications, but due to the generic skills of anyone working in the mountaineering industry, these qualifications can also be used for non-professional purposes.

The SAQA Qualifications are unit standard based and are recognised by the SA Government for the purpose of registering as a guide with the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), but are not widely recognised by the "industry" role players due to the poor standards initially experienced in the roll out of the NQ's.

On the other hand, the MDT Awards are widely recognised by industry roll players, and two of the awards are recognised by the UIAA as meeting the international model standards, BUT are not recognised by DEAT for purpose of registration as a guide in terms of the 2nd Tourism Amendment Act of 2000.

So should you wish to be a registered and legal guide in SA, you must hold the SAQA Qualification, the MDT Awards will not be sufficient for this purpose, however if your need is non-professional, then the MDT awards programme is the way to go.

In fact the SAQA and MDT qualifications are so similar, (*the SAQA Units were written based on the MDT programme*), that the MDT Training Programme is still the best option for the training part of your qualification before you apply for assessment, whether you need a SAQA National Qualification or just an MDT Award.

## 6. Professional Qualifications Courses

Our aim is to develop our students' technical competence while instilling a love and respect for the mountains. Courses are kept small and personal and the vibe is always warm, friendly and non-competitive. We support our students from the moment they sign up for a course, through the assessment stage and further in their careers.

Have a look at our extensive range of courses and [contact us](#) with any queries you may have. We are always willing to discuss your needs and work out the best programme for you.

When choosing a trainer or assessor please ensure that they are appropriately registered to provide the services you are contracting them for. Venture Forth will gladly provide copies of all our instructors' and assessors' registrations and qualifications for your perusal.

**Venture Forth offers the following Professional Qualifications Courses:**

- [Top-Rope Supervisor](#)
- [Single Pitch Rock Climbing Guide](#)
- [Abseil Guide \(Level 1 & Level 2\)](#)
- [Basic Mountain Walking Guide](#)
- [Advanced Mountain Walking Guide](#)

Courses for other (higher) levels are arranged from time-to-time; please keep an eye on our website for special arrangements and dates.

## Basic Mountain Walking Guide course

### Who should do this course?

This professional development training course is aimed at the person who is serious about qualifying for a career as a mountaineering adventure guide or anyone who runs mountain walking (hiking) adventures as part of their work or recreation such as school teachers, camp councillors and social workers.

This is the ideal course for those wanting to guide groups of walkers on demarcated footpaths and hiking trails of South Africa and teaches all the skills required to become a competent trail walking guide.

The course is based on the MDT Basic Mountain Walking Leader syllabus and is ideal preparation for later assessment as a MDT Basic Mountain Walking Leader or for THETA Mountaineering Guide Unit Standard TG19 towards a National Qualification in Mountaineering Guiding. After the course you will automatically be registered with the MDT as a learner.

**Topics covered include:** Equipment; trip and route planning; group management; hiking skills and campcraft; client care and communication; map reading and basic navigation; basic wilderness first-aid and dealing with emergencies.

**Participant requirements:** The course is open to any reasonably healthy and physically capable person over the age of 18. Courses for younger participants can be arranged on request although MDT registrations will be limited to students over 18 years. Previous trail hiking experience is recommended.

**Course duration & times:** 5 days  
Usually run as five consecutive days with the first 3 days being theory and the last 2 days practical overnight trail walking.  
Usually from 09:00 until 17:00 daily except the last two days that includes an overnight outing.

**Group size & ratios:** Minimum of four students required for course to run.  
Maximum of 12 students per course.  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 12 Students for theory  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 6 Students for the practical

**Equipment:** Venture Forth can provide all group equipment for this course but students are required to have their own personal hiking equipment and correct clothing and footwear as set out in the course equipment list.

**Recommended follow-up programs:** 1) [Advanced Mountain Walking Guide training course](#)  
2) [Guided trekking trips in off-trail conditions](#)



## Advanced Mountain Walking Guide course

### Who should do this course?

This professional development training course is aimed at the person who is serious about qualifying for a career as a mountaineering adventure guide or anyone who runs mountain walking (hiking) adventures as part of their work or recreation such as school teachers, camp councillors and social workers.

This is the ideal course for those wanting to guide groups of mountain walkers on off-trail, rugged, remote and difficult mountain terrain all over South Africa and teaches all the skills required to become a competent mountain walking guide.

The course is based on the MDT Advanced Mountain Walking Leader syllabus and is ideal preparation for later assessment as a MDT Advanced Mountain Walking Leader or for THETA Mountaineering Guide Unit Standard TG19 and/or TG25 towards a National Qualification in Mountaineering Guiding. After the course you will automatically be registered with the MDT as a learner.

**Topics covered include:** Equipment; trip and route planning; group management; advanced hiking skills and campcraft; client care and communication; map reading and advanced navigation; advanced wilderness first-aid and dealing with emergencies.

**Participant requirements:** The course is open to any reasonably healthy and physically capable person over the age of 18. Courses for younger participants can be arranged on request although MDT registrations will be limited to students over 18 years. Previous trail hiking experience is recommended.

**Course duration & times:** 8 days  
Usually run as 5 consecutive days of theory lectures and a separate 3 day practical off-trail walking trip. Usually from 09:00 until 17:00 daily except the last 3 days that includes an overnight outing.

**Group size & ratios:** Minimum of four students required for course to run.  
Maximum of 12 students per course.  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 12 Students for theory  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 6 Students for the practical

**Equipment:** Venture Forth can provide all group equipment for this course but students are required to have their own personal hiking equipment and correct clothing and footwear as set out in the course equipment list.

**Recommended follow-up programs:** 1) [Rock climbing training courses](#)  
2) [Guided Expeditions to gain further experience](#)



## Top-Rope Supervisor course

### Who should do this courses?

This professional development training course is aimed at the person who is serious about qualifying for a career as a mountaineering adventure guide or anyone who runs rock climbing adventures as part of their work or for recreation such as school teachers, camp councillors and social workers. The course is also ideal for instructors at climbing walls on cruise ships.

This is the ideal course for those wanting to supervise group top-rope climbing whether at outdoor crags or at the local climbing gym. The course follows the MDT Top-Rope Supervisor syllabus and is ideal preparation for later assessment at that level or towards a National Qualification in Mountaineering Guiding. The course has the option of an add-on module to supervise lead climbing on bolt-protected (sport) climbing routes. After the course you will automatically be registered with the MDT as a learner.

**Topics covered include:** Equipment; knots; group management; anchoring principles & set-ups; client care and communication; guide books & route finding; dealing with emergencies.

**Participant requirements:** The course is open to any reasonably healthy and physically capable person over the age of 18. Courses for younger participants can be arranged on request although MDT registrations will be limited to students over 18 years. Previous basic sport climbing experience is required OR the completion of the Introduction to Sport Climbing Course.

**Course duration & times:** 1 day OR 2 days with Sport Climbing Leading module.  
Usually run as two consecutive days.  
Usually from 09:00 until 16:00 daily.

**Group size & ratios:** Minimum of three students required for course to run.  
Maximum of 6 students per course.  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 6 Students

**Equipment:** Venture Forth can provide all group equipment for this course but students are encouraged to have their own personal gear such as harness, rock shoes, helmet, belay device and locking karabiner.

**Recommended follow-up programs:** 1) [Abseil Guide Course](#)  
2) [Traditional Climbing Leader's Course](#)  
3) [Single-Pitch Supervisor Course](#)



## Abseil Guide course (level 1 & 2)

### Who should do this course?

This course is aimed at the person who is serious about qualifying for a career as a mountaineering adventure guide or anyone who runs group abseiling adventures as part of their work or recreation such as school teachers, camp councillors and social workers.

For prospective mountain professionals this course is usually the first step on the road to qualify as a rock climbing or mountaineering guide.

The course is based on the MDT Abseil Supervisor (Level 1 & 2) syllabus and is ideal preparation for later assessment as a MDT Abseil Supervisor or for THETA Mountaineering Guide Unit Standards TG20 and TG21 towards a National Qualification in Mountaineering Guiding. After the course you will automatically be registered with the MDT as a learner.

**Topics covered include:** Equipment; knots; personal and client abseiling skills; abseil instruction and communication; anchor construction; fixed and releasable abseil set-ups; hoisting systems; rope ascending; improvised rescue techniques; dealing with emergencies and client care.

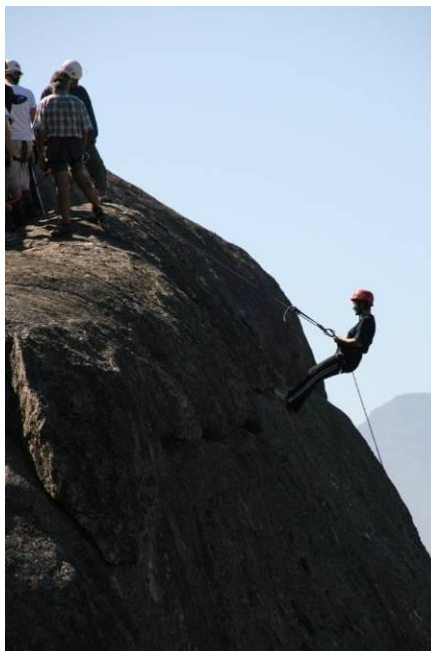
**Participant requirements:** The course is open to any reasonably healthy and physically capable person over the age of 18. Courses for younger participants can be arranged on request although MDT registrations will be limited to students over 18 years. Prospective students should have basic rope work, abseiling or climbing experience or have attended an introductory sport climbing course.

**Course duration & times:** 4 days  
Usually run as four consecutive days or over two weekends  
Usually from 08:00 until approximately 17:00 depending on group size.

**Group size & ratios:** Minimum of three students required for course to run.  
Maximum of 8 students per course.  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 4 Students

**Equipment:** Venture Forth provides all equipment for this course. Students must only bring appropriate clothing, water and food for the day. Students are encouraged to have their own harness, helmet, locking karabiner and abseil/belay device.

**Recommended follow-up programs:** 1) [MDT Top-Rope Supervisor Course](#)



## Single-Pitch Rock Climbing Guide course

### Who should do this course?

This professional development training course is aimed at the person who is serious about qualifying for a career as a mountaineering adventure guide or anyone who runs rock climbing adventures as part of their work or for recreation such as school teachers, camp councillors and social workers. The course is for persons who are already competent traditional climbers and now wanting to start a guiding career.

This is the ideal course for those wanting to supervise group climbing activities in the single-pitch environment at both traditional and bolt-protected (sport) venues. The course follows the MDT Single-Pitch Supervisor syllabus and is ideal preparation for later assessment at that level or towards a National Qualification in Mountaineering Guiding. After the course you will automatically be registered with the MDT as a learner.

**Topics covered include:** Equipment; knots; group management; anchoring principles & set-ups; client care and communication; guide books & route finding; dealing with emergencies; leading on sport and traditional routes

**Participant requirements:** The course is open to any reasonably healthy and physically capable person over the age of 18. Courses for younger participants can be arranged on request although MDT registrations will be limited to students over 18 years. Previous sport & traditional climbing experience is required OR the completion of the **Traditional Climbing Leader's Course**. Participants should have completed the **Abseil Guide Course**.

**Course duration & times:** 2 days  
Usually run as two consecutive days.  
Usually from 09:00 until 17:00 daily.

**Group size & ratios:** Minimum of three students required for course to run.  
Maximum of 6 students per course.  
Maximum of 1 Instructor : 6 Students

**Equipment:** Venture Forth can provide all group equipment for this course but students are encouraged to have their own personal gear such as harness, rock shoes, helmet, belay device and locking karabiner.

**Recommended follow-up programs:** 1) [MDT Rock Climbing Leader's Course](#)  
2) [MDT Rock Climbing Instructor's Course](#)



## 7 Professional Qualifications Assessments

Venture Forth is accredited to do assessments for the SA Mountaineering Development & Training Trust (MDT) awards as well as for Mountain Guide national qualifications under the Tourism & Hospitality Education and Training Authority (THETA).

Our assessment services are powered by our association with Adventure Qualifications Network (AQN) – [www.aqn.org.za](http://www.aqn.org.za)

Adventure Qualifications Network is an approved THETA Service Provider: registration number 613/P/000005/2004.

Walther Meyer of Venture Forth is a THETA Accredited Assessor: registration number 613/A/000076/2005. - [http://www.aqn.org.za/walther\\_meyer.htm](http://www.aqn.org.za/walther_meyer.htm)

Venture Forth occasionally calls in the services and expertise of other assessors due to the various scopes and requirements of qualifications and awards. We will always ensure that the assessor called in works to our high standards of quality and professionalism and that such an assessor is appropriately qualified and registered.

**! Remember: Ask your assessor for his registration number and check with THETA before paying for an assessment.**

Our policy is to not only view an assessment as a “test or exam” but to rather see it as a further learning opportunity. Assessments are always open, fair and independently moderated and you have the right to appeal should you not like the outcome of your assessment.

Please download the PDF document: How to be a Legal Tourist Guide from the resources section on our [website](#) or [email](#) us for a copy.

### Steps in the Assessment Process:

- 1) Consult with Venture Forth about your options and ask as many questions as you have.
- 2) Decide whether you need a MDT Award or National Qualification or both.
- 3) Sign up and pay for assessment. Receive the student handbook.
- 4) Agree on an assessment plan with your assessor.
- 5) Complete assessment; receive feedback; complete re-assessment if required.
- 6) Assessor sends portfolio of evidence for moderation.
- 7) Moderator gives feedback to assessor.
- 8) Certification.

### An assessment usually consists of the following components:

- 1) Written Exam/s
- 2) Written Project/s
- 3) Practical Skills Test

We would like you to get the best advice regarding assessment and your career path as an adventure guide so please contact us for a consultation.



## 8 Frequently Asked Questions

### **Do I get a certificate for any of the recreational courses?**

We will issue an in-house Certificate of Attendance on request. This is not an Award or Qualification certificate.

### **I have loads of experience, must I still attend a training course or can I just come for assessment?**

You have the option to apply for "Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)" for any of the National Qualifications or MDT Awards. By applying for RPL you can apply for assessment without first attending a recognised training course. Please keep in mind that many of the skills taught on the Professional Qualifications Courses are not standard recreational climbing skills and few recreational climbers can perform these skills without prior training, regardless of their previous climbing experience. Be honest with yourself when judging your own climbing skills and experience before applying for RPL.

### **I can climb grade 26 on sport so I should be able to pass a Rock Climbing Guide assessment with my eyes closed, right?**

No. We are not much concerned with the grade you climb, but rather with your technical skills and experience. Can you place trad gear? Can you solve common rock climbing problems? Can you deal with an emergency? Can you perform all the skills in the syllabus or Unit Standard?

### **I want to be a Rock Climbing Guide; must I do the Abseil Guide qualifications and the Mountain Walking Guide qualifications?**

Yes. You have to hold the lower qualifications in order to obtain the higher level qualifications. And, yes, you have to be able to read a map and use a compass (amongst other skills) so you must do the Mountain Walking qualification TG19 with an off-trail navigation endorsement as well.

### **Can I get RPL for the Mountain Walking Guide qualifications because I can climb grade 26 and use loads of gel in my hair?**

NO. Go away.

### **I was in the SAS Commando's (Navy SEALs, Recce's etc etc); can I get RPL based on this experience?**

If you were really operational or trained in one of those military units, with all respect, you would most likely still need to attend the course as the skills of a commercial mountain guide is totally different from any mountain skills you may have learned in the military. If you are an egotistical clown lying about being in one of those units, shame on you, and please go away.

### **I hold a qualification or award issued in another country, can I use it to register as a mountain guide in South Africa?**

No, sorry. You need to hold the relevant National Qualification. You may however be able to use your foreign qualification to apply for RPL to help you obtain your National Qualification.

### **I am a UIAGM qualified mountain guide, may I guide in South Africa.**

No, sorry. You need to hold the relevant National Qualification and be registered as a legal Tourist Guide in terms of the Second Tourism Amendment Act of 2000. You should however be able to use your qualification to apply for RPL to help you obtain your National Qualification.

### **I need to get a certificate to work on a cruise ship as the climbing wall supervisor, but I have never climbed before.**

Ideally you should attend an Introduction to Sport Climbing course so that you can learn to climb and then complete the Top-Rope Supervisor Award training and assessment courses. Please [call us](#) to discuss your options.

### **What happens if I do not pass an assessment?**

Depending on why you did not pass your assessment you can arrange with your assessor for re-assessment of the skills you still need to practice at a later date. Venture Forth often accommodates a single re-assessment without any additional charge or with minimal additional charge depending on circumstances. This will all be agreed upon when you sign up for assessment.

### **I think the assessor was unfair. What now?**

If you disagree with your assessor you can appeal to an outside moderator. When you sign up for assessment we will give you the details of the moderator. The moderator will then resolve the issues and assist you further. The assessor may also call on assistance from the moderator if there is a disagreement with a learner.

### **Can I be guaranteed a job in the adventure industry once I have passed an assessment?**

No, but being trained by a reputable mountaineering school and obtaining the correct qualifications for the position you want will obviously make job hunting easier.

### **Will Venture Forth find me a job in the adventure industry if I attend a course or assessment with them?**

No. We will however help you with advice, based on our many years in the industry, to steer you in the right direction. We are well-known and respected in the adventure industry and doing your training or assessment with us is already a big step towards finding employment.

### **I employ a lot of adventure guides at my company. Can I claim back the money spent on training and assessment from the Skills Development Fund (SDF)?**

Yes, but only for training and assessment towards National Qualifications. You can not claim from the SDF for monies spent on MDT Awards. Please [contact us](#) for more information or help in this regard.

### **Where do you run your courses and assessments?**

As a Cape Town-based company we run most of our open enrolment training and assessment courses in the Western Cape Mountains. Areas often used include the Table Mountain chain and the Cederberg, Hex River and Groot-Winterhoek ranges. We do run courses in other parts of the country on request and our operations are fully mobile. Please [contact us](#) to discuss your requirements. We are currently expanding operations to other parts of the country, so please keep an eye on our [website](#) for updates.

### **Can I book a private training course or assessment for the guides at my company?**

Yes. We can arrange courses to suit your needs and availability. Please [contact us](#) to discuss your requirements.

### **Is the cost of the assessment included in the training course price?**

No. Assessments are charged for separately to the training courses. Please [consult with us](#) regarding pricing as the cost of assessment differs depending on your requirements.

### **Does Venture Forth supply credit for training or assessment courses?**

No. All training and assessment courses must be paid for in full before the start of the course, but please [consult with us](#) regarding payment options as we would like to help you if possible.

### **How do I enrol for a course or assessment?**

Please [contact us](#) and we will supply you with an enrolment form and all other information.

# VENTURE FORTH international

## PRICE LIST – TRAINING COURSES

Course	Duration	Cost PP
<b>Recreational Courses</b>		
Introduction to Sport Climbing	2 Days	R 1250-00
Introduction to Traditional Climbing	2 Days	R 1500-00
Traditional Climbing Leader's Course	4 Days	R 2500-00
AR Rope Skills Competency	1 Day	R 650-00
<b>Professional Qualification Courses</b>		
Top-Rope Supervisor	2 Days	R 1250-00
Abseil Supervisor – Level 1	3 Days	R 1600-00
Abseil Supervisor – Level 2	1 Day	R 650-00
Single Pitch Supervisor	2 Days	R 1650-00
Basic Mountain Walking Leader	5 Days	R 2250-00
Advanced Mountain Walking Leader	8 Days	R 2950-00

**Wilderness and Urban First-Aid Training Courses available in conjunction with WildMedix. Information available on request.**

**Notes:**

- 1) Above prices are subject to change without notice and includes VAT @ 14%.
- 2) A 50% deposit is required to confirm booking and full payment a minimum of 30 days before the course.
- 3) A minimum of 2 participants are required for Rock Climbing Courses to take place and a minimum of 4 participants for Mountain Walking Courses to take place.
- 4) VFI Standard Conditions of Booking apply to training courses, a copy of which can be obtained from the office.
- 5) Course prices include course notes, tuition and technical equipment as required.
- 6) MDT course prices include MDT registration fees and MDT printed materials.
- 7) Course prices exclude accommodation, meals, transport, permits, cable car fees, clothing or equipment of a personal nature.
- 8) Above prices are for training courses only and does not include the assessment course.
- 9) Participants should obtain their own personal medical, rescue and travel insurance before the course, if required.

Venture Forth International incorporating:  
**CAPE TOWN SCHOOL of MOUNTAINEERING**



- for a Higher Education -

[www.ventureforth.co.za](http://www.ventureforth.co.za)



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