

The background of the cover is a faded photograph of a person in a helmet and life vest on a boat, holding a rope. Another person is visible in the water in the background. The text 'Stadium Safety and Rescue Training Course Guide' is overlaid in a large, bold, black font. At the bottom, there are decorative red and blue curved lines.

Stadium Safety and Rescue Training Course Guide

British Canoeing Stadium Safety and Rescue Training Course Guide

Course Philosophy

The British Canoeing Stadium Safety and Rescue Training course is designed for individuals wanting to provide safety cover at an artificial, white water course.

The objective is to provide underpinning knowledge and introduce simple and safe practical skills that can be applied appropriately. Although a comprehensive training course, it does not endorse a level of competence and, as such, an artificial white water venue may require an assessment to take place to verify the standard of competence of an individual.

Note: This course does not cover safety from a craft/boat.

Course Aims

- To improve individuals' awareness of the risks and safety skills required in an artificial, white water environment;
- To teach Shout, Reach and Throw line techniques;
- To teach candidates to swim safely in an artificial, white water environment;
- To understand the need for structure and working as a team in an emergency situation;
- To outline basic rescue protocols that prioritise the safety of the individual above all others;

- To introduce and develop the 'clean rope' principle;
- Recovery of equipment.

Prerequisites

All candidates should be:

- Confident swimmers.

A First Aid certificate is not a prerequisite; however, the holding of a First Aid certificate is seen as good practice and highly recommended.

Equipment

Techniques and concepts taught throughout the British Canoeing Stadium Safety and Rescue Training course require minimal technical equipment.

The following equipment should be available for students to use on the course:

- A range of throw lines;
- River Knife – sharp, safely stowed but easily accessible, single-handed;
- Buoyancy aid and helmet;
- Whistle.

Venue and duration

The philosophy of the course is to provide realistic training on artificial, white water courses.

The course will take a minimum of 4 hours' practical delivery time.

Course ratio: 1 Stadium Safety and Rescue Provider : 6 candidates.

Risk assessment and disclosure

By its very nature, training in British Canoeing Stadium Safety and Rescue could involve students undertaking activities that they normally try and avoid, e.g. swimming in white water. It is essential that British Canoeing Stadium Safety and Rescue Providers are aware of the inherent risks involved and take steps to minimise any risks that students are exposed to.

Other risks associated with artificial, white water courses need to be considered and appropriate mechanisms need to be in place through a risk assessment, identifying also how these are managed, including appropriate clothing and PPE cold water shock, CPR for drowning, dry and secondary drowning, water quality, hypothermia, effects of prolonged immersion, common injuries and emergency action plans.

Two key steps to this are site selection and risk assessment. Both of these have to be considered in the planning stage but also dynamically during course delivery.

Selection of a suitable training site is essential. Issues such as depth of water for swimming, reliability of water levels and in-water hazards, all need to be considered. Once a site is identified, it needs to be risk assessed, recorded and reviewed periodically.

When actually delivering courses, Providers need to undertake a continual dynamic risk assessment to ensure that the sites being used for particular sessions are suitable and do not present unacceptable levels of risk. If a site is well known and regularly used, this may be achieved by visual inspection, but it might also need such measures as the Provider checking the site via pre-swimming the section or shallow water inspection.

Appropriate pre-course information should be made available to all candidates to understand content of the programme as well as inherent risks. Medical declarations need to be obtained and appropriate measures put in place, including stowage and access to medication.

Programme Core Principles

The following core principles are good practice guidance and should be considered in this light as opposed to fixed rules.

CLAP:

Communication

- Signals and communications should be agreed in advance with rafting and coaching sessions at the venue;
- Ability to summon assistance/additional help (use of radios or other forms of communication).

Line of sight

- Always be positioned where you have the paddler in your line of sight;

- Maximise overall view of the white water course; consider blind spots, corners, other users and hot spots.

Avoidance is better than cure

- Managing course users/flow through the course;
- Stopping paddlers for a pinned craft, etc.;
- Create an atmosphere of support;
- Clean Rope and Clean profile;
- Self, Paddlers, Victim, Equipment;
- Shout–Reach–Throw.

Position of maximum usefulness

When protecting a section of the artificial course, safety cover should position themselves so as to cover the highest risk. This usually means covering the problems that are most likely to occur, rather than the most dangerous hazard.

Consideration of slalom poles and lines should also be considered and taken into account when positioning.

Clean Rope and Equipment Principles

1. Throw lines: Remove any loops or knots from the end of your throw line. The loop in the 'bag end' needs to be small enough to prevent a hand or foot passing through it easily. Good flotation within the bag reduces the risk of snagging.
2. Ropes should be managed in a way that allows them to run freely. Avoid letting them swirl in eddies or tangle.

Equipment principles

The Clean principles equally apply to all equipment used/worn; be aware of snagging possibilities from:

- Buoyancy aids;
- Clothing;
- If you carry a rope, carry a knife;
- Importance of wearing appropriate clothing and footwear, as well as a buoyancy aid and helmet.

Prioritising principles

Self-Paddlers-Victim-Equipment

This principle for prioritisation in the rescue situation is useful in helping rescuers to remember that their first priority is to themselves, then to other paddlers using the

course, then to the victim and lastly to equipment.

Shout-Reach-Throw (S-R-T)



This principle encourages rescuers to consider the risk to themselves when deciding on what strategy to use when undertaking a rescue.

Options covered within this course:

- Shout instructions to encourage self-rescue;
- Reach;
- Throw line rescues;
- Wading.

Course Content

The following programme outline is designed to highlight specific sessions that need to be incorporated in the British Canoeing course. The delivery, timing and order of each session will differ to suit clients and conditions. It is important that the chosen progressions are logical and safe.

Awareness of water users and potential risks

As part of the training course, all participants need to have a raised awareness of water users, not only within their direct care but also others. Although there is not an expectation to have a comprehensive understanding, being able to recognise potential issues and how to report to the appropriate person is important:

- Able to identify inappropriate clothing, footwear and PPE;
- Appreciation of the diverse users and craft that use an artificial, white water venue including:

Craft - Kayak/Canoe/OC1/SUP/Rafts/SOT/River

Boards/Hotdogs/Slalom

Groups - Coaching sessions/Spectators/Guided sessions/Pay and Play;

- Appropriateness of craft being used and specific venue policy;
- Identification and reporting of potential issues – water users' ability/wearing appropriate PPE when close to the water's edge, risks, etc.;
- Equipment requirements for coaches and safety cover using the venue.

Self-rescue

There is a risk that working around and rescuing at an artificial, white water course that someone could end up in the water. The ability to be confident and swim in white water is essential, ensuring to highlight the importance of clean kit and avoiding unnecessary snagging hazards:

- Introduce moving water hydrology identifying wave features, eddies, eddy lines, flow direction and dealing with bends;
- Facilitate the learning of the defensive swimming position. Swimming on your back, feet downstream and kept high (in order to reduce the possibility of foot entrapment). Use this method to ferry glide and position for a short, aggressive swim to the bank;
- Facilitate the learning of aggressive swimming. Head up front crawl, swimming in the direction you wish to travel;
- Facilitate the learning of transferring from defensive to aggressive swimming;
- Facilitate the learning of swimming across eddy lines. Speed and angle of attack similar to that used to cross eddy lines in a boat should be applied. Where there is difficulty crossing an eddy line with these methods, then an eddy line roll can be used. An eddy line roll can be an effective technique when crossing powerful eddy lines where the speed of the river or shallow water prevents the swimmer from being able to attack the eddy line in a front crawl position. From either the defensive or aggressive swimming position, the swimmer sets in towards the eddy line. As the swimmer hits the eddy line, they reach over the eddy line, locking their hand into the eddy and complete a full body barrel roll while kicking hard with their legs;
- Facilitate the learning of fending off a fixed object. Defensive swimming position, absorb impact by bending legs, then stretch legs and push away and to the side of the obstruction;
- Facilitate learning in strategies for swimming through a stopper.

Wading Techniques

Wading can be used in a number of rescues and to assist in recovering equipment and, as such, is a very useful skill. Like swimming, wading in moving water has its own unique challenges and requires practicing:

- Discuss the reasons for using wading, such as recovery of equipment, assisting a swimmer, reaching an incapacitated or unconscious casualty;
- Attaching throw lines/slings to recover equipment;
- Discuss assessment of appropriate depth for wading and its dependence on the speed of water;
- Awareness of risks and other water users, including slippery sides;
- Facilitate learning in the range of appropriate wading techniques;
- Use of hand rail/paddle/pole or another person for support;
- Supporting an incapacitated person or unconscious casualty whilst further assistance arrives.

Recovery of a Swimmer

This section is presented here as a progression from low risk to high risk options for the recovery of a swimmer following the SRT principle. In practice it may not be possible to deliver these sessions in this order, but this progression should be highlighted to the course participants.

It is highly recommended that participants working in an artificial, white water environment attend an appropriate First Aid course. While delivering this training course, Training Providers should highlight the issues around drowning, i.e.:

- Current CPR protocols for drowning;
- Anyone suspected of having aspirated water should attend hospital for monitoring.

Shouting rescue

Introduce the concept of shouting and encouraging a swimmer to self-rescue. A rescuer, either in a boat or on the bank, can often see more than a swimmer in the water, encouraging them to carry out certain actions they may not be aware of.

A shouting rescue can be used where the emotional state of the swimmer means it is not safe for a rescuer to approach and offer assistance (panicking causing aggression or panicking causing passivity). Shouting instructions can encourage these swimmers to be more co-operative, including 'feet up', 'swim on your back' and 'feet downstream'.

Reaching rescue

Equipment:

- Paddle/pole;
- Throw line used as a hand rail.

Content:

Explain benefits of a reaching rescue, i.e. for short distance rescues the reach is placed accurately at the swimmer and can be held there until the swimmer arrives, making it easier to pick up than a throw line and the pendulum can be much shorter and quicker.

Explain the limitation of the rescue is that the load comes on very quickly. Highlight the importance of shouting and getting eye contact with the swimmer:

- Facilitate the learning of the use of a paddle as a reaching rescue and where it can be used (assisting a self-rescuing swimmer the last few feet to the bank or pulling a swimmer out of the current and into an eddy);
- Introduce the use of a throw line as a handrail while using a reaching rescue. Place the handrail to provide support in the anticipated direction of pull;
- Introduce the idea of facing in the direction of the expected load (possibly downstream).

Throw line based rescue

Content:

- Introduce different types of bags and line including colour, diameter and length;
- Explain clean principles as they apply to throw lines, i.e. the rope should

float, there should:

- be no knot in the rope end;
- the loop at the bag should not be big enough to put a hand through and the bag should float;
- Explain issues about care and maintenance, i.e. throw line should be stored dry and clean and away from exposure to UV light and ensuring they are not contaminated;
- The importance of consideration of when, or whether, to use a throwline as a specific rescue due to the increased risk to other water users;
- Facilitate the importance of positioning, consideration of slalom poles and lines, as well as where the swimmer can be safely placed and helped from the water;
- Introduce the concept of using a throw line to recover a swimmer to the bank;
- Introduce the principle of how the flow of water will pendulum the swimmer to the shore and how this might be limited by eddy lines;
- Facilitate learning in throwing a throwline including under arm, round house, over arm (bent and straight arm);
- Facilitate learning in re-throws, i.e. split coil and throwing into stopper (amount of rope deployed);

- Facilitate learning in dynamic stance (facing anticipated direction of pull, arms and legs slightly bent, legs shoulder width apart and one leg in front of the other) and method for holding rope (hands held one in front of the other with fingers and thumbs pointing up, rope laid across gap between thumb and forefinger, grip the rope and twist hands forward forming a 'Z' shape in rope);
- Consideration in managing paddlers to safety on steep or slippery banks;
- Dealing with multiple swimmers.

Highlight the importance of shouting at, and getting eye contact with, the swimmer before throwing. Encourage accuracy before increasing distance and explain that the throwline should be thrown at the swimmer, not up or down stream.

The British Canoeing Stadium Safety and Rescue Training is a practical course allowing the candidates to feel comfortable and confident in being able to provide safety cover at artificial, white water courses. Providers should ensure that candidates are introduced to both safe, defensive and aggressive swimming techniques as well as being rescued throughout the practical sessions, so that candidates experience loads applied to ropes during rescues. Using both sides of the artificial course and various positions throughout will provide learners to experience rescuing from different perspectives.

Recovery of equipment

There is a need to recover equipment including boats, paddles and any other equipment that may have come loose during a swim. The programme covers the following areas to ensure appropriate training is provided, as well as raising the awareness of personal safety:

- Personal safety during equipment retrieval – wade in/use of pools/handrails;
- Considerations of dealing with a pinned or broached craft and risk to other water users;
- Manual handling – heavy boats and fragile boats.