Surf Kayak Safety and Rescue

Sample Programme and Session Plans

BCAB Surf Kayak Safety and Rescue
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Introduction

This document provides an example of the British Canoeing Awarding Body (BCAB) Surf Kayak Safety and Rescue course programme and the accompanying session plans for the 7 modules.

Tutors are required to obtain, understand and consider the participants' current understanding, knowledge, ability, the craft that they use and the typical environments that they paddle. This can be done prior to module 1, through introductions or part of a more formal process.

Note: Tutor to participant ratio is maximum 1:6.

The main focus for the Tutor is to ensure all participants are able to contribute, explore and practice. The 6 and a half hour programme does not take into account introductions, information gathering, administration, getting ready or any transportation, the timings provided are for the delivery of the modules.

All modules are interactive, practical sessions, discussing and using equipment and exploring possible solutions to common issues in a moderate surf environment.

Notes:

1. Maximum of 3 participants immersed in the water at one time.

2. Participants rescue from their chosen craft throughout the course.

Participants

Participants need to either hold the British Canoeing Awarding Body Surf Kayak Award or equivalent ability in/on their preferred craft, due to the paddling environment and the boat/ski/boat control required to participate fully in the course.

The Surf Kayak Safety and Rescue course is available for all ages. Tutors should check participants' suitability, as well as having appropriate mechanisms for anyone under 18.

Equipment

In addition to the participants chosen craft, the following equipment needs to be made available throughout the course:

- A selection of tow systems appropriate for a moderate surf environment;
- A closed cockpit kayak;
- A sit-on-top kayak;
- A wave ski.

Venue

The Surf Kayak Safety and Rescue course must be delivered in suitable venues that do not exceed a moderate surf environment.

Course duration

The Surf Kayak Safety and Rescue course is a 6 and a half hour programme that consists of 7 modules, of which can be delivered in a day or modular over a maximum of an eight-week period that suits the participants.

Time of year and water temperature

It is crucial that courses are run at appropriate times in the year that provide an appropriate learning environment, enabling the course to be delivered as outlined with participants immersed in the water. Care is advised and courses should not run when water and air temperatures are low.

SURF KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

COURSE PROGRAMME

Module	Time	Module Outline
Module 1	45 minutes	Planning ● Decision making framework ● Planning considerations ● Dynamic Risk
Module 2	45 minutes	Beach management ● Craft overview, safety considerations and features ● Clothing and equipment worn ● Additional safety equipment ● Safe paddling etiquette ● Injury and accident prevention ● Signals
Module 3	30 minutes	Safety frameworks ● Moderate surf environment ● Weather considerations ● Safety principles ● Calling for help and attracting attention
Module 4	90 minutes	Surf based rescues ● Assisting swimmers ● Throwline systems ● Walk in rescues ● Recovering equipment
Module 5	60 minutes	Self-Rescues ● Self-rescues ● Assisted self-rescues
Module 6	90 minutes	Deep water rescues

		- Rescuing various craft from participants preferred craft - Techniques for getting swimmer out of the water - Shepherding - Unconscious / unresponsive rescues - Entrapped paddler
Module 7	30 minutes	Reflection and Skills Checklist - Reflections from the course - Reflections on own learning and areas for development - Skills checklists

SURF KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 1

Module Title:	Planning
Time:	45 minutes

Module Outline:

- Decision making framework
- Planning considerations
- Dynamic Risk

Delivery:

Decision making framework/Planning and dynamic risk:

In one group, share an overview of the decision making that is required from start to finish (planning through to delivery).

Discuss the three areas being considered, the environment, the conditions and the group.

Explore sources of information available, discuss and show as a group, sharing what works best, is trusted and how to interpret.

The group:

Discuss what is important to understand about your group, including:

- How to information gather / share
- Understanding individual needs and wants
- Permissions and medical if required
- Agreeing what the group will and will not do
- Discuss what support skills we have
- Discuss rescues, what can we achieve and what external support is available.

As a group, finish with a reminder of the need to consider the environment, conditions and group for planning and pre-empt the next steps. Highlight dynamic risk assessments during the session and identifying key times such as anticipated tidal changes or weather impacts.

Notes:

	Environment	Conditions	Group
Planning			
During Session			
Key Times			

This module requires a presentation, internet access, apps and discussion.

This session could be delivered in different forms; online, classroom or at the beach.

Throughout, encourage participants to reflect on the learning from this module and openly discuss as a group.

SURF KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 2

Module Title:	Beach management
Time:	45 minutes

Module Outline:

- Craft overview, safety considerations and features
- Clothing and equipment worn
- Additional safety equipment
- Safe paddling etiquette
- Injury and accident prevention
- Signals

Delivery:

Craft overview, safety considerations and features:

- Show how to carry out checks, for example, any damage, splits, worn to the structure, deflated/leaks, drain plugs, etc.;
- Explain how additional craft buoyancy can aid rescues (if applicable);
- Show relevant attachment points that need to be checked for safety and carrying, for example, swim tails, leash attachment points, cockpit rims; quick release systems as well raising awareness of snag potentials;
- Explain how to check paddles and discuss strength suitability for surf environments;
- Hold a discussion around the use of tee pieces and belts.

Securing yourself in your kayak

Note: Anyone paddling a Ski or surf on top must wear a leash.

- It is recommended that thigh strapped surf on top paddlers wear a buoyancy aid as well as a leash;
- A demonstrable quick release belt system should be shown if they are worn on the ski,

Clothing and equipment worn:

- Highlight the need for considering the time of year and weather when choosing appropriate clothing;
- Discuss and show appropriate personal clothing, balancing the need for dressing for a potential immersion versus the performance disadvantages that this can bring;
- Investigate types of PFD and impact vest to show the advantages and disadvantages of each.

- The use of well fitted helmets whilst surfing

Additional safety equipment:

Show additional safety equipment that is highly recommended to carry, or be available close by:

- Mobile phone in a waterproof case (fully charged);
- Whistle;
- Spare Paddles
- Small first aid kit;
- Spare clothing;
- Food and drink.

Safe paddling etiquette:

Explore the group's understanding of etiquette relative to different breaks. Show main rules to keep people safe.

Injury and accident prevention:

With the group, discuss the types of intervention that can be briefed to help avoid incidents. These might include:

- Avoidance of hazards;
- Paddle out and surf zones;
- Buddy systems;
- Signals and means of communication;
- What to do in the event of an incident;
- Safer surfing practices.

Signals:

A short session on some signalling systems that can be used to communicate with groups in the water, and also the main structured signals used by lifeguards on UK Beaches.

Notes:

It is expected that Providers and participants wear suitable equipment during the delivery of the course, including helmets and PFD's.

It is better if participants bring their own clothing and equipment so they can practise and consider uses and limitations.

Discuss real life examples of etiquette and surf based injuries or accidents.

Throughout encourage participants to reflect on the learning from this module and openly discuss as a group.

SURF KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE
MODULE 3

Module Title:	Safety Frameworks
Time:	30 minutes

Module Outline:

- Moderate surf environment
- Weather considerations
- Safety principles
- Calling for help and attracting attention

Delivery:

Moderate surf environment:

In a group, explore and establish identification features of the moderate surf environment:

- Discuss the various factors that make the venue moderate - wave height/type, wind direction/strength, rips/currents, other users, tide state, springs/neaps, etc.;
- Managed environments – such as those that have lifeguarded or patrolled areas;
- Explore the potential dangers within the moderate surf environments that the group are at and ways to mitigate those dangers.

Weather considerations:

Using resources, encourage the group to consider the weather considerations:

- Discuss where to obtain weather forecasts and what to take into consideration, show apps from a phone and websites available/ screenshots if no service is available;
- Explain about wind strength and direction, including **off-shore winds**/outlook and temperature. These considerations are all significant in deciding where to go and what to wear;
- Emphasise why it is important to observe the actual conditions vs. forecast. Are the water and conditions aligned to the forecast?
- Emphasise the importance of not underestimating the wind, both strength and direction, as well as how the land can affect wind strengths and directions with funnelling effects;

- Raise awareness of cold-water shock, hypothermia, heat exhaustion dehydration and sunstroke.

[Weather and Tides video](#)

Safety Principles:

- The use of CLAP (Communication, Line of Sight, Avoidance, Positioning) when on the water;
- Remind the group of the STCE (Self, Team, Casualty, Equipment) protocol and provide examples in context to the participants and the moderate surf environment;
- Discuss what rescues are of a low risk and how other rescues may be of a higher risk to self and others;

Calling for help and attracting attention:

- Discuss the practicalities of using a mobile phone in a waterproof case whilst on the water to contact the appropriate emergency services;
- Discuss other methods of calling in help – emphasise the difficulties on isolated beaches, whistle, methods of location, PLB's etc.

Notes:

Although the group will be familiar with the concepts of risk assessment, their attention should be drawn to the dynamic nature of the environment and the need to identify developing hazards particularly in relation to rescues.

Safety frameworks and principles must be revisited on each of the modules 3-5 as either setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

Throughout, encourage participants to reflect on the learning from this module and openly discuss as a group.

SURF KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 4

Module Title:	Surf based rescues
Time:	90 minutes

Module Outline:

- Assisting swimmers
- Throwline systems
- Walk in rescues
- Recovering equipment

Notes:

Only 3 participants to be immersed in the water at any one time.

Participants to rescue from their preferred craft.

Delivery:

In a group, remind participants of the need to consider low-risk to high-risk rescues, and that making contact with a person or their equipment can increase the risk to the rescuer.

Remind participants of the principles of getting afloat safely:

- Safe distance from each other;
- Helping each other;
- Not paddling out directly behind someone.

Provide scenarios throughout, enabling participants to explore and understand the context of the techniques being used:

- A paddler has come out of their craft. Reconvene them with their equipment on the beach;
- A paddler is feeling tired from paddling and wants assistance. Practice guiding them in through the surf, using contact tows where necessary;
- You are running a session from the beach when two paddlers swim on the same wave, what do you do?

Assisting swimmers:

- Encourage the participants to consider the environment and whether it is more appropriate to assist the swimmer to the bank/shore or to their craft;
- Explore and practice safe methods of approaching swimmers; positioning relative to the waves, etc.;
- Practice methods of picking up swimmers, appropriate to the preferred craft that the participant is paddling.

Throwline systems:

- Advise participants to keep throwing systems simple and appropriate to the moderate surf environment;
- Discuss scenarios and beach set ups where a throwline would be of benefit in a rescue but equally where it might hinder;
- Explain the difficulties of working with lines in the moderate surf environment and provide opportunities for participants to try throwing from a waded position to understand the skills required.

Walk in rescues:

- Re-visit the STCE (Self, Team, Casualty, Equipment) protocol as this will always underpin the decision making process when rescuing;
- Discuss the importance of clear instructions to the swimmer in the first instance;
- Discuss some of the hazards of contact with conscious swimmers in the surf zone;
- Investigate strategies and priorities of the rescue where an unconscious casualty is involved, getting them from the water to a safe place on land.

Recovering equipment:

- Explain the importance but also the difficulties of keeping hold of equipment;
- Demonstrate methods of carrying retrieved paddles;
- Explore how a retrieved craft can be moved both inside and outside of the surf zone;
- Explain the surf zones and how the fastest way to re-unite a paddler with their equipment may not always mean going to the beach.

Notes:

Safety frameworks and principles covered in pre-course information must be revisited either when setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

Some towing techniques can be revisited in module 5 if the craft requires emptying.

Throughout, encourage participants to reflect on the learning from this module and openly discuss as a group.

SURF KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 5

Module Title:	Self-rescues
Time:	60 minutes

Module Outline:

- Self-rescues
- Assisted self-rescues

Delivery:

Self rescues:

- Demonstrate, explore and practice simple and effective methods of good practice self-rescue techniques from the participants preferred craft;
- Highlight that if they are close to the beach and it's accessible, it may be more appropriate to retain their equipment and wade to the beach.

Examples:

- Capsize in the surf but use the rotation of the wave energy to re-right the boat;
- Wait for the wave to subside then roll up in the trough between waves;
- Ski - Flip the ski and climb back on from either the side or the tail.

Assisted self rescues:

- Demonstrate, and explore simple and effective methods of good practice assisted self rescues.
- Practice as a group capsizing in deep water and gain assistance from another paddler to help empty the water and climb back into/onto the craft;

Notes

Only 3 participants to be immersed in the water at any one time.

Participants to rescue from their preferred craft.

This phase of the course can be tiring for some participants, so ensure they can rest in between attempts.

It is important that participants are confident they have a self-rescue technique that works for them, either on their own or assisted. Participants should consider what limitations this might place on their venue choice.

Safety frameworks and principles must be revisited either when setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

SURF KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 6

Module Title:	Deep water rescues
Time:	90 minutes

Module Outline:

- Rescuing various craft from participants preferred craft
- Techniques for getting swimmer out of the water
- Shepherding
- Unconscious / unresponsive rescues
- Entrapped paddler

Notes:

Only 3 participants to be immersed in the water at one time.

Participants to practise from their preferred craft.

Delivery:

Rescuing various craft from participants preferred craft:

- Remind participants of safe manual handling, the use of appropriate techniques and the use of assistance;
- Demonstrate appropriate and effective methods. In pairs, explore and practice emptying various craft from their preferred craft - keeping participants out of the water at this stage will allow focus on recovery of the craft, using appropriate safe techniques;
- As most deep water rescues will occur just on or just outside the break zone, the importance of speed and alertness should be emphasised.

Techniques for getting swimmer out of the water:

- Demonstrate strategies that allow swimmers to be returned to low volume tailed and finned boats;
- Explore the use of carries on the boat for swimmers to be returned to shore.

Shepherding

- Demonstrate the use of shepherding a conscious paddler back to the beach. Particular emphasis should be placed on positioning and communication throughout the rescue.

Unconscious / unresponsive rescues:
- Explore options to recover the unconscious/unresponsive paddler to the beach. These should be simple and include options of what to do once the casualty has been righted or removed from their craft;
- Demonstrate and practice with unconscious paddlers in and out of their craft;
- Reiterate the importance of ensuring and checking the unconscious person is breathing and the urgency of calling for help.

Entrapped paddler:
- From the participants preferred craft, practice rescuing an entrapped ski paddler and kayaker;
- Introduce effective and efficient options to rescue an entrapped paddler, including the rescuer entering the water and reaching over the upside down craft. Explore how this technique can also be initiated from their chosen craft;
- Discuss and practice the next steps after the initial rescue.

Notes:

Both the unconscious and entrapped paddler scenarios will very likely require the rescuer to exit their ski/boat and physically remove the casualty from their craft to then bring them to shore. Live incidents where these scenarios have happened have shown this is the most effective method. However, every incident would have to be judged on the developing hazards.

This phase of the course can be tiring for some participants, so ensure they can rest in-between attempts.

Safety frameworks and principles must be revisited either when setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

It is important that participants are confident they have the ability to rescue both a ski paddler and kayaker that are entrapped in their craft.

SURF KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 7

Module Title:	Reflection and Skills Checklists
Time:	30 minutes

Module Outline:

- Reflections from the course
- Reflections on own learning and areas for development
- Skills checklists

Delivery:

Reflections from the course:

- In a group, discuss and share key learning points, what worked well, what was difficult, what solutions did you come up with, etc. Use a format to capture the learning to aid and support individual reflections.

Reflections on own learning and areas for development:

- In pairs, discuss your areas of strength and what you would like to develop. Use the skills checklist to aid discussions.

Skills checklist:

- Participants complete their skills checklist with the Tutor, agree areas for development and ideas on how to complete the development areas identified.