

The background of the cover is a grayscale photograph of a kayaker in a black wetsuit navigating white water rapids. The kayaker is positioned in the center-right of the frame, leaning forward. The water is turbulent with white foam. On the right side, there are several white concentric curved lines that resemble ripples or a target. At the bottom of the page, there are decorative elements including a pink diagonal band and blue diagonal bands, along with white curved lines that echo the ones on the right side.

**Leadership and Raft Guide Awards
Advanced Surf Kayak Leader
Assessment Guidance**

Advanced Surf Kayak Leader Assessment Guidance

Introduction

This document provides specific guidance for Tutors, Trainers, Assessors, Deployers and Aspirant Leaders on the assessment criteria and standards expected. The assessment criteria are summarised in the 'Skills Checklist' and further expanded upon here in the 'Assessment Guidance'. It is the guidance within this document that is used to inform assessment decisions.

This Assessment Guidance should be read in conjunction with:

- British Canoeing Awarding Body Leadership and Raft Guide Course Guide
- British Canoeing Awarding Body Advanced Surf Kayak Leader Skills Checklist
- British Canoeing Awarding Body Leadership and Raft Guide Tutor Notes
- British Canoeing Awarding Body Participant Focused Leadership Guidance
- British Canoeing Awarding Body Leadership and Raft Guide Sample Programme

The 'Leadership and Raft Guide Course Guide' provides details of the award and its general requirements. The 'Leadership and Raft Guide Tutor Notes' expand on the organisational matters relating to training and assessment. The accompanying 'Participant Focused Leadership Guidance' provides clarity on the expected leadership principles and approaches. The 'Leadership and Raft Guide Sample Programme' provides examples of 1-day and 2-day assessment outlines, as well as a 2-day Leadership training course programme.

Assessment Format

Assessments must include the leading of a suitably sized group (minimum of 3). The British Canoeing Awarding Body Advanced Surf Kayak Leader qualification is appropriate for leading others in advanced surf. This includes reefs, points, offshore breaks and sandy beaches, which may have significant hazards (e.g. rocks, strong rips, etc.) and may be remote and/or have difficult access. Waves may be powerful, steep, pitching, fast, hollow and heavy. Up to and above double overhead when

seated in a kayak in the trough of the wave (or head high and above for a stand up surfer).

The group of students organised for assessment should reflect this demand whilst remaining within the Assessor's own risk management requirements.

Assessment venues chosen by Leadership Tutors must include a reasonable range of options for the Leader to choose from.

The Advanced Surf Kayak Leader assessment will normally run over 1-2 days. This will depend on the course ratios and logistics relating to access of suitable environments. The Leader will be working from their suitably chosen surf kayak and will be assessed leading a group of 3-4 paddlers.

Any equipment borrowed at the time for the purpose of the assessment will be treated as the Leader's own.

Assessment Methods

Each Leader must be seen **leading a group (minimum of 3)** in advanced surf environments.

Observation of practical leadership will be supplemented with questioning, discussion and specific tasks as required. Assessors need to gather sufficient evidence of competence in a range of scenarios relating to leading surf sessions in the advanced surf environment, not just those experienced during the practical assessment.

Assessment Criteria

A. Participant Focused Leadership Skills

Leaders should understand and skilfully apply the [British Canoeing Awarding Body Leadership Model Principles](#) within the context of the award and environment that they operate. For further guidance and examples, refer to the 'British Canoeing Awarding Body Participant Focused Leadership Guidance' document.

Judgement and Decision making

A competent Leader uses effective judgement and decision making. Decision making is an essential skill for Leaders. Both slow-time decisions and in-the-moment, real-time and potentially pressured decisions will have a significant impact on the safety, enjoyment and performance of the group members.

Venue Selection

The Leader is required to select venues based on the needs of their participants. It is expected that their repertoire should include all environments stated in the environmental definitions.

Safety

The Leader designs and implements effective safety frameworks by undertaking sound risk assessments throughout, hazard awareness, pitching activities to suit both the group's aspirations and challenge. The Leader positions themselves within the group to cover safety and allow freedom. They will implement an effective communication strategy, involving and engaging their group to enable a safe and enjoyable day that meets the group's aims and objectives.

Vision

The Leader is a positive role model and aims to inspire others, showing both passion and enthusiasm for paddlesport consistent with the British Canoeing Awarding Body core values (e.g. access, environment, educational philosophy, equality).

Support and Challenge

The Leader provides empathetic, social support in a positive atmosphere, recognising individual needs, differences, strengths and abilities. The Leader creates a supportive climate to encourage teamwork. At times, the Leader supports appropriately challenging experiences, aligning the level inherent in the activity to motivate individuals, agreeing goals, helping others to set appropriate levels of challenge throughout.

Leadership Style and Behaviours

The leadership style and behaviours applied will meet the needs of participants, the task and the environment. The Leader will empower their group when appropriate but may also need to be more controlling at times to ensure safety.

Equipment

The Leader ensures that personal, group and safety equipment is suitable for the planned journey including craft choice and outfitting, clothing and supplementary resources to provide a safe and enjoyable trip.

Environmental Impact

The Leader manages themselves and the group to reduce any negative impact on the environment, local communities and other water users.

B. Personal Paddling Skills

Leaders need efficient and effective personal skills to facilitate safe, quality, enjoyable surf sessions in an advanced surf environment. They will need to show the application of technical and tactical skills, the underpinning physiological attributes, psychological skills and the judgement and decision making to perform safely and in control within the stated environments.

All Leaders must show competence as described in this assessment guidance.

Leaders can present for assessment in any suitable surf kayak craft that is safe and suitable for the remit of the award and the assessment tasks. The Leader is required to demonstrate the ability, judgement and decision making to select appropriate craft from which to lead, matched to their personal competence, experience and the leadership demands.

In addition to this, Assessors should explore, through questioning, which craft the Leader deems they are competent to lead/lead from; the Assessor will sample (practically and through questioning) as much of the range as possible throughout the duration of the assessment.

Applied Technical and Tactical Skills

The emphasis is on the ability to effectively and efficiently control the boat in real situations, with consistency left and right in an advanced surf environment. Skills should be assessed holistically throughout the duration of the assessment; with manoeuvres and actions **applied tactically** in the given environment and framed within the context of being able to fulfil the given leadership responsibilities.

Leaders need to show consistency in their ability to achieve a desired outcome. It is expected that they can control/manoeuvre their craft without having to think too much about it, by using effective and efficient actions to achieve the outcome. While technical correctness is not emphasised, poor practice that puts the body at risk of injury is not acceptable.

Throughout the duration of assessment, Leaders should demonstrate the following skills:

- Application of information gathered to make suitable tactical decisions surrounding peak choice and paddle out strategies.
- The ability to launch and land in a variety of situations and conditions.
- A full range of forward paddling technique tactically applied to the challenges presented by the environment through paddle outs and take offs.

- Display green wave turns utilising appropriate technical skills on the full face of the wave. Rides should include manoeuvres appropriately selected, pertinent to the opportunities presented by the wave.
- Consistent and reliable means of preventing capsize and a reliable roll in advanced surf conditions.

Physical and Mental Awareness and Wellbeing

The Leader demonstrates the ability to respond to, and manage, the physical demands associated with leading a session. For example, the Leader is aware of their individual capacities and can apply techniques and tactics to fulfil their leadership responsibilities within their physical limitations.

The Leader demonstrates the ability to respond to, and manage, the psychological demands associated with leading a session. For example, the Leader is able to perceive, understand and manage their emotions and arousal levels appropriately.

The Leader can manage themselves within appropriate safety frameworks. For example, an appropriate attitude to risk and personal hydration, nutrition and warmth.

C. Rescue Skills

To ensure the Leader's own safety and the safety of others, they need to show they can deal with a range of rescue situations relevant to advanced surf conditions.

The emphasis for the Leader is that they have accurate judgement of personal skills and can be an effective Leader, so they can look after themselves, and others, while operating in the environment.

Assessment session/s must be planned for the Leaders to perform the necessary rescues. Realistic scenarios should be set up to evaluate the Leader's ability to assess the situation, make appropriate decisions throughout the rescue, and maintain their leadership responsibilities. It is likely the assessment of criteria are blended together through a range of practical scenarios and questioning.

Scenarios: The overall ethos is that the Advanced Surf Kayak Leader is operating in advanced surf, suitable for the group members' personal abilities. With this in mind, it is the Leader's safety management and leadership skills that are the main priority to ensure that life threatening scenarios are not at all likely. Scenarios should reflect the typical incidents that the Leader is likely to have to deal with, whilst operating within the scope of their remit.

The Leader must demonstrate application of appropriate underpinning principles, knowledge and understanding to inform effective actions during a rescue scenario; this includes:

- accurate assessment of the situation;
- appropriate choice of rescue, appropriate tactics used;
- effective execution of rescue (including safe, effective emptying of water, management of equipment/people and recovery of the swimmer);
- effective recovery of casualty (and equipment) to a stable environment;
- application of shout-reach-throw-row-go principles;
- application of self-team-victim-equipment protocol;
- appropriate selection/use of rescue equipment;
- avoidance of hypothermia;
- appropriate first aid response;
- appropriate personal safety precautions taken (including safe moving and handling);
- appropriate manner (calm and in control);
- appropriate support for the person being rescued and the other group members;
- maintaining group management responsibilities.

The Leader can carry out emergency procedures when necessary. This will include, for example:

- following organisational procedures;
- assess – consider options – raise alarm – stabilise – execute plan;
- being able to evacuate from the water;
- knowing when to take an individual out of a session;
- having knowledge of nearest phone, help, vehicle;
- calling for qualified assistance where required; understand who to call and what information they may need;
- giving accurate information when calling for qualified assistance.

Leaders should be able to display appropriate techniques and strategies for dealing with the following:

- recovering a capsized paddler and their equipment in advanced surf;
- recovering an upright, incapacitated paddler to the shore in advanced surf;
- rescue and stabilise an unconscious paddler and have an open airway. The Leader is required to explain appropriate further actions after initial stabilisation;
- perform an effective self-rescue in advanced surf;
- recovering a paddler in a swamped craft in advanced surf.

D. Underpinning Background Knowledge, Understanding and Experience

Leaders should demonstrate that they are aware of potential risks, safety precautions and safety thresholds pertinent to leading groups on advanced surf environments.

Equipment

- Leaders will demonstrate knowledge and experience of using a range of equipment, both personal and group safety;

- Leaders will know how to evaluate any equipment they use and the importance of how it should be maintained and carried, or worn, when in use.

Safety

- Leaders will be able to show they are aware of the risks and potential dangers associated with operating in advanced surf environments;
- Leaders will show that they have an understanding of simple solutions to common problems that they may encounter, whilst paddling in advanced surf conditions;
- Leaders should demonstrate dynamic risk assessments for themselves and the group;
- Leaders should carry a method of communicating and attracting attention such as Personal Location Beacon, Flares, LED Flares, VHF and mobile phone. Leaders would need to rationalise why they have chosen and carry such equipment.

Weather and Planning

- Leaders to demonstrate an awareness of any likely effect and interaction of current, swell, wind and fetch;
- Leaders can access a variety of sources of surf, weather, tide and swell forecasts, be able to interpret such weather forecasts to predict the actual conditions to be encountered;
- Leaders can plan an appropriate safe session, based on the group's aspirations and ability.

Access and Environment

- Leaders can demonstrate that they are aware of the range of access issues and where they can find additional information;
- Leaders demonstrate an appreciation of the environment they paddle and an awareness of how to protect it;
- Leaders should promote a positive image for Surf Kayaking with other water users and local residents.

Experience

Quality experience is critical to underpin sound leadership decisions. Assessors must be confident that the Leader has a relevant and adequate experience base to draw upon and support their decision making process. Examples of evidence could include a logbook, practical assessment and thorough discussion and questioning.

It is expected that the Leader's base of experience supports:

- leading in a range of advanced surf environments and conditions;
- leading in a range of challenging and changeable conditions;
- rescues in a range of situations;
- being able to deal with a range of problems;
- working with a range of different people; for example, known and unknown participants with different needs and aspirations.

This experience may be gained through a variety of different leadership roles within paddlesport and can be supplemented with relevant experience outside of the paddlesport environment.

Deployment Matters and Leadership Responsibilities

The Leader demonstrates an understanding of deployment matters and their leadership responsibilities. For example:

- First Aid training;
- Keeping up-to-date with current best practice;
- Continual Professional Development (CPD);
- Safeguarding training and disclosure;
- Equality;
- Medical declaration, working with injuries, physical competence;
- Duty of Care;
- Code of Ethics;
- Incident reporting;
- Injury prevention and manual handling;
- Insurance;

- Deployer's risk assessment and operating procedures.