



# **Leadership and Raft Guide Awards**

## **Raft Trip Leader**

### **Assessment Guidance**

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### **Introduction**

This document provides specific guidance for Providers, Trainers, Assessors, Deployers and Aspirant Raft Trip 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 Raft Trip Leader Skills Checklist
- British Canoeing Awarding Body Leadership and Raft Guide Provider 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 Provider Notes' expand on the organisational matters relating to training and assessment. Whilst 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 a 1 day and 2 day assessment outlines, as well as a 2 day Leadership and Raft Guide sample training programme.

### **Assessment Format**

Assessments must include the leading of a suitably sized flotilla (minimum of 2 rafts and one safety kayaker). The British Canoeing Awarding Body Raft Trip Leader qualification is appropriate for leading a flotilla of rafts in the natural white water environment. The group of students organised for the assessment should reflect this demand, whilst remaining within the assessor's own risk management requirements.

The Raft Trip Leader Assessment will run over 2 days on 2 different rivers. Assessment venues chosen by Leadership Providers must include a reasonable range of options for the Raft Trip Leader to choose from.

## **Assessment Methods**

Each Raft Trip Leader must be seen **leading a flotilla (minimum of 2 rafts and 1 safety kayaker)** in conditions at the top end of the Raft Trip Leader white water environment:

- Raft Trip Leader (Grade 3) – Grade 3 natural white water river
- Raft Trip leader (Grade 4) – Grade 4 natural white water river

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 sessions in the natural white water environment, not just those experienced during the practical assessment.

## **Assessment Criteria**

### **A. Participant Focused Leadership Skills:**

Paddlers should understand and skillfully 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.

## **Venue Selection**

The Raft Trip Leader can select safe and appropriate trips for the group, guides and safety boaters, matching the trip and conditions to the group's aims, aspirations, enjoyment and safety.

## **Safety**

The Raft Trip Leader creates and implements effective safety frameworks by providing appropriate safety briefs, undertaking sound risk assessments throughout, hazard awareness, pitching activities to suit both the group's aspirations and challenge.

## **Vision**

The Raft Trip 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**

The Raft Trip Leader provides empathetic social support in a positive atmosphere, recognising individual needs, differences, strengths and abilities, as well as creating a supportive climate to encourage team work.

## **Challenge**

The Raft Trip Leader supports appropriately challenging experiences, aligning the level inherent in the activity to motivate other guides and individuals, agreeing goals and setting appropriate levels of challenge throughout.

## **Leadership Style and Behaviours**

The leadership style and behaviours applied meet the journey requirements, participant needs, the task and environment, at all times.

## **Judgement and Decision Making**

The Raft Trip Leader uses effective judgement and decision making. Decision making is an essential skill for Leaders. Both slow-time decisions and in-the-



moment time pressured decisions will have significant impact on the safety, enjoyment and performance of the group members.

## **Equipment**

The Raft Trip Leader has overall responsibility to ensure that personal, group and safety equipment is suitable for the planned journey including raft set ups, clothing and supplementary resources to provide a safe and enjoyable trip.

## **Environmental Impact**

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

## **B. Personal Rafting Skills**

Raft Trip Leaders need efficient and effective personal skills to facilitate safe, quality, enjoyable sessions in a white water 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 Raft Trip Leaders must show competence as described in this assessment guidance.

## **Applied Technical and Tactical Skills**

The emphasis is on the ability to effectively and efficiently control the raft in real situations, with consistency left and right in a white water 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 guiding responsibilities.

Raft Trip Leaders need to show consistency in their ability to achieve a desired outcome. It is expected that they can control/manoeuvre their raft without having to

think too much about it, by using other raft members to execute 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, Raft Trip Leaders should demonstrate the following personal skills:

- **Ferry glide:** The Raft Trip Leader must be able to perform forward and backward ferry glides, showing effective and efficient control of angle and momentum.
- **Breaking in and out:** The Raft Trip Leader must demonstrate the ability to break in and out, with control and appropriate judgement, avoiding aggressive dipping of tubes.
- **Surfing waves and holes:** Raft Trip Leaders should show a clear use of applied momentum and appropriate angle to drive through waves and holes as required, for the planned exit and setting up for future water.
- **Stroke work:** Raft Trip Leaders should demonstrate efficient use of strokes to correct boat angle including pry, draw and sweep with power.
- **Control of raft using clients:** The Raft Trip Leader should show continual evidence of client safety with get downs, overs and paddle positioning.

Raft Trip Leaders should demonstrate the appropriate use of clients to manoeuvre the raft to avoid or deliberately bounce off of obstacles as planned.

### **Physical and Mental Awareness and Wellbeing**

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

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

The Raft Trip 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 Raft Trip Leader's own safety and the safety of others, they need to show they can deal with a range of rescue situations relevant to the raft and the natural white water environment.

The emphasis for the Raft Trip Leaders is that they have accurate judgement of personal skills and can be an effective Trip Leader, so they can look after themselves and others whilst rafting on a river.

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

**Scenarios:** The overall ethos is that the Raft Trip Leader is operating in white water. With this in mind, it is the 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 Raft Trip Leader is likely to have to deal with, whilst operating within the scope of their remit.

The Raft Trip Leader must demonstrate competence in a range of specific rescues. This must include the following:

- Flip drill
- Swimming
- Throw lines
- Tensioned diagonal
- Mechanical advantage
- Vector pull
- Foot entrapment
- Emergency scenarios

The minimum times for the completion of each rescue given aims to provide guidance to Raft Trip Leaders and Assessors regarding reasonable expectations. They are not intended to be used as a race against the clock. The Raft Trip Leader is required to remain calm and in control, balancing the need for the rescue to be done in a timely fashion but not forgetting the self-team-victim-equipment protocol.

The Raft Trip 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, 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
- understanding of white water features and hazards



- understanding the effect of weather conditions
- 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 Raft Trip Leader can carry out emergency procedures when necessary, this :

- 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 with what information they may need
- giving accurate information when calling for qualified assistance
- ability to rescue and stabilise an unconscious paddler and have an open airway. The Raft Trip Leader is required to explain appropriate further actions after initial stabilisation.

### **Flip Drill in white water specific environment**

Raft Trip Leaders are required to effectively demonstrate a flip drill, either in moving water or on an eddy line.

Minimum requirements:

The Raft Trip Leader must conduct a 2 minute flip drill which includes a swim of 10m to the raft, get in raft, flip raft, climb on raft, headcount, re-flip, climb back into upright raft. This must not be completed using the flip line to climb onto or into the raft and the Raft Trip Leader must retain their guiding paddle throughout.

## **Swimming**

Raft Trip Leaders are required to effectively swim and self-rescue in a white water environment.

Minimum requirements:

The Raft Trip Leader must demonstrate safe and effective swimming in moving water. During the assessment, the Raft Trip Leader should select three appropriate eddies and demonstrate the ability to swim into/out of these features, managing their own safety in the course. The Raft Trip Leader must demonstrate defensive and aggressive swimming skills and retain their guiding paddle throughout.

## **Use of a throwline in white water**

Raft Trip Leaders are required to effectively rescue participants using a throwline in moving water.

Minimum requirements:

The Raft Trip Leader must have the ability to execute an accurate and effective 10m throw line rescue to a swimmer with a re-throw to a second swimmer who has entered the water 30 seconds after the first swimmer. This should highlight dynamic casualty rescue, rope managed in hands at all times not on the floor, appropriate selection of eddy's for casualty rescue and appropriate casualty communication.

## **Tension diagonal**

Raft Trip Leaders must be able to construct an appropriate tension diagonal.

Minimum requirements:

Raft Trip Leaders must build a tension diagonal, in a dry land scenario. Raft Trip Leaders must load a distributing anchor from the raft to the bank with a tensioned line, angled as close to the current vector as possible. This must have a clean releasable end downstream and can be a body belay system, no knot or other recognised method.

### **Mechanical advantage**

Raft Trip Leaders must understand and be able to construct an appropriate mechanical advantage.

Minimum requirements:

Raft Trip Leaders should be given 5 minutes to build a mechanical advantage system that can be used to unpin a raft (this can be dry land based using a load distributing anchor for the raft and wrap 3 pull 2 for the land anchor).

After construction, and not within the time limit, the Raft Trip Leader is to demonstrate turning the mechanical advantage into an external system.

### **Vector pull**

Raft Trip Leaders are required to demonstrate and understand the use of vectors.

Minimum requirements:

Raft Trip Leaders must be able to tension a line and then increase the force by an appropriate vector pull.

### **Foot entrapment**

Raft Trip Leaders must be proficient and confident in dealing with a foot entrapment.

Minimum requirement:

Raft Trip Leaders must be able to demonstrate a range of techniques to deal with a situation involving a foot entrapment and understand the level of risk that these different techniques involve. This can be completed on dry land.

### **Emergency scenarios**

The Raft Trip Leader needs to demonstrate the skills and understanding to deal with remote trip emergencies.

Minimum requirement:

The Raft Trip Leader must deal with an appropriate emergency scenario which must include:

- client evacuation from a pinned raft,
- lost / damaged equipment,
- stranded clients on a midstream rock, etc.
- an appropriate First Aid scenario.

#### **D. Underpinning Background Knowledge, Understanding and Experience**

A wide range of background knowledge, understanding and experience is required to fulfil the Raft Trip Leaders responsibilities and to inform the Leaders judgements and decision making. The assessment of this will be blended throughout the assessment programme, with questioning, discussion, specific tasks and evidenced by the actions taken.

Practical leadership, personal paddling and rescue skills are underpinned by:

- the ability to explain and justify leadership decisions
- an extensive base of background knowledge and understanding
- relevant and adequate experience to support the decision making process
- understanding of deployment matters and leadership responsibilities
- a commitment to reflective practice and the ability to learn from experience.

#### **Experience**

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

It is expected that the Raft Trip Leader base of experience supports:

- leading flotillas in a variety white water rivers
- 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.

We suggest that candidates who are successful at assessment normally have a minimum of the following experience, gathered through a range of different white water environments:

#### **Raft Trip Leader (Grade 3)**

- 20 sessions acting as a Raft Trip Leader on grade 3 (of at least 2 hours' duration)

#### **Raft Trip Leader (Grade 4)**

- 40 sessions acting as a Raft Trip Leader on grade 4 (of at least 2 hours' duration)

### **Planning and Navigation**

Raft Trip Leaders need to demonstrate appropriate planning of river journeys, taking into account the group and guides abilities, water levels, weather forecasts and topography of the land. Planning should include identifying escape points during the trip, as well as appropriate emergency procedures. Throughout the assessment, Raft Trip Leaders are required to demonstrate appropriate navigational skills using both a map and compass to locate their position, as well as the ability to navigate effectively for an evacuation.

## **Deployment Matters and Leadership Responsibilities**

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

- First Aid training
- Keeping up-to-date with current best practice
- Safeguarding training and disclosure
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
- 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.