



# **Paddlesport Instructor Award**

## **Assessment Guidance**

# British Canoeing Awarding Body

## Paddlesport Instructor Assessment Guidance

### Introduction

This document provides specific guidance for learners, tutors and assessors on assessment and the criteria and standards required for the British Canoeing Awarding Body Paddlesport Instructor. The assessment criteria are summarised in the 'Paddlesport Instructor Learner Development Pack' 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 the British Canoeing Awarding Body:

- Paddlesport Instructor Learner Development Pack;
- Paddlesport Instructor Qualification Specification;
- Paddlesport Instructor Course Guide.

The 'Course Guide' provides details of the award and its general requirements, whilst the accompanying 'Tutor Notes' expand on the organisational matters relating to training and assessment. Further detail of the content associated with the underpinning knowledge and understanding is provided through the eLearning package, Tutor Programme and Lesson Plans, and Qualification Specification.

### Environmental Range

The Paddlesport Instructor qualification/course (and all assessment activities) is framed by taster/starter sessions being delivered in **Very Sheltered Water** conditions.

The **Very Sheltered Water Definition** includes:

- quiet canals with easy bankside access and egress;
- small lakes, which do not have difficult landing areas and are not large enough for problems to occur should there be a sudden change in conditions;

- specified sites on gentle, slow moving rivers;
- enclosed swimming pools.

The definition implies normal conditions where weather conditions are not in themselves likely to cause problems. Care is advised when water temperatures are low. At any point, the paddler should not be more than 50 metres from the bank.

## **Craft**

Learners will choose to paddle **one** type of craft for the personal paddling and rescue skills assessment. The instructor's craft used will be identified on their certificate.

The options are; kayak (this can be open-cockpit or closed-cockpit), open canoe, sit on top and stand up paddleboard.

Learners working in canoe can choose to paddle solo and/or tandem. Learners who choose to paddle as part of a tandem crew are expected to be able to paddle at both bow and stern. It must be assumed that their crew member is an inexperienced paddler.

## **Assessment Criteria**

By the end of the course, learners are required to have demonstrated knowledge and skills as identified in the following three areas:

1. Professional Standards
2. Personal Paddling Skills
3. Rescue Skills

### **1. Professional Standards**

By the end of the course the learner is expected to demonstrate a range of professional standards characteristic of the Paddlesport Instructor role.

Formative assessment methods are used to provide the learner with qualitative feedback about their behaviour and attributes. This should help to prepare them to work within clubs, centres, or with other paddlesport providers; helping the

learner to develop themselves as a deployable instructor. The formative assessment will include elements of:

- self -assessment;
- peer assessment and discussion;
- assessor observation and professional discussion.

The Learner Development Pack provides essential support materials for this element of assessment.

The following attributes are considered essential to the Paddlesport Instructor role and will form the basis of this formative assessment:

### **1.1 upholding the reputation and standing of the profession and the sport:**

It is important that the instructor appears:

- clean, dressed appropriately;
- punctual;
- calm;
- to follow relevant codes of conduct;
- as a positive role model.

### **1.2 working as part of a team to facilitate paddlesport activity:**

It is important that the instructor:

- works as part of a team, preparing for and clearing up the practical sessions;
- shows a professional approach to how they treated others (polite, helpful, supportive, attentive, respectful, equitable);
- stimulates the trust and respect of others;
- is generally cheerful;
- uses clear and effective communication.

### **1.3 selecting behaviour that avoids causing a negative impact on the environment and other users:**

It is important that the instructor:

- avoids/minimises litter and erosion;
- avoids causing distress to wildlife and other users through sensitive site selection, use of shared bank areas and noise level;
- follows any relevant codes of conduct.

### **1.4 actively engages in their own learning to develop their own professional skills and attributes:**

It is important that the instructor:

- actively engages in all aspects of the Paddlesport Instructor course;
- shows the motivation and curiosity to continue their personal development beyond the course.

## **2. Personal Paddling Skills**

By the end of the course the learner is expected to be able to demonstrate that they have the required personal paddling skills to support their future instructional duties. This element of assessment is assessed holistically throughout the duration of the Paddlesport Instructor course.

The instructor is required to show efficient and effective personal skills in their chosen craft, in a Very Sheltered Water environment. This is framed by the requirement for the instructor to be able to:

- facilitate the delivery of enjoyable sessions;
- maximise the opportunities offered by the very sheltered water environment;
- support the safety of participants and themselves;
- perform rescues;
- inspire and instil confidence in others.

The instructor is required to:

### **2.1 select and set up their craft:**

The instructor demonstrates the ability, judgement and decision making to select appropriate craft from which to instruct, matched to their personal competence and experience. They will need to correctly set up their craft (e.g. seat, footrest, backrest, airbags, painters, spray deck, leash, etc.).

### **2.2 use safe lifting and carrying techniques:**

The instructor consistently shows safe lifting and carrying techniques to move boats/boards between vehicle/trailer/storage and the launch site (assistance is recommended).

### **2.3 effectively launch and land:**

The instructor consistently shows they can launch and land from a range of reasonable access/egress points with the boat/board afloat (e.g. pier, steps, slipway, beach), without using the paddle or an assistant.

### **2.4 safely and effectively manoeuvre and control their craft:**

Personal skills are assessed holistically throughout the duration of the course in the very sheltered water environment. The instructor should be able to manoeuvre their craft accurately and effectively around the environment and, in doing so, draw from a repertoire of skills.

For Stand Up Paddleboarders, there is an expectation that these skills will be performed standing.

It is reasonable to expect the instructor to apply skills from their repertoire that will enable them to **consistency and accurately:**

- maintain control in a straight line, using appropriate correction strokes;
- paddle a course that is reasonably straight, with occasional gentle turns;
- stop in a controlled manner within a minimum number of strokes (approximately 4);

- make effective tight turns around a point, followed by acceleration in a new direction;
- able to make an open turn around a point without losing speed;
- reverse paddle to manoeuvre their boat into a new position (not required for SUP).

**Note:** that this should not be seen as a tick list of techniques.

Whilst learners need to be consistent and accurate in their ability to effectively manoeuvre their craft, it is recognised that their techniques may still be in the practice stage of learning. The instructor might need to think about the specific technical points, may be inconsistent and/or may need reminding. They should be aware of the elements of a quality performance, able to implement them within their performance at least some of the time and show the motivation to continue their learning and development in areas as required.

The following qualities are expected, although an intermittent performance is acceptable:

- an active posture using the larger muscles of the body;
- muscle tension and 'readiness' throughout the key muscles, with a basic level of tension and efficient and economical movements;
- balanced, supple and controlled movement of the body, paddle and boat/board;
- efficient transfer of power from the body and water to create movement of the boat/board;
- co-ordinated and efficient strokes using the feet, legs, torso, upper body;
- application of power to move up to the paddle, beyond it, or around it (not trying to pull the paddle through the water);
- balance and stability when power is applied to strokes;
- use of trim, tilt and/or edge (use of rails) to aid efficiency.

Inconsistencies within techniques are inevitable in the practice stage of learning. However, poor practice that puts the body at risk of injury is not acceptable and must always be corrected and action planned.

## **2.5 manage themselves within self-selected safety frameworks:**

For example:

- show an appropriate attitude to risk and personal hydration, nutrition, warmth;
- show an awareness of risk factors, alert to relevant/changing factors;
- use skills, techniques and tactics used that minimise risk of injury to oneself.

## **2.6 present themselves as a positive role model to follow:**

For example:

- lead by example and behave like they want their group members to behave;
- care about and respect the environment;
- care about and respect other paddlers;
- show passion and enthusiasm for paddlesport, for the activity, for the task at hand;
- look after equipment;
- show good practice and competence within personal paddling skills;
- show they are open and committed to learning;
- stimulate the trust and respect of others;
- is generally cheerful and a pleasure to be around.

## **3. Rescue Skills**

By the end of the course the learner must have shown that they have the competence, judgement and decision making skills to safely deal with a range of rescue scenarios. Learners are required to demonstrate competence in **all** of the scenarios identified in 3.1–3.6, from whichever craft they choose to paddle. They need to:



- choose an appropriate rescue technique;
- follow the shout-reach-throw-row protocol;
- follow the self-team-casualty-equipment protocol;
- give clear and correct instructions;
- effectively execute the rescue;
- effectively recover the casualty (and their equipment);
- take appropriate personal safety precautions (including safe moving and manual handling);
- demonstrate an appropriate manner (calm and in control).

Scenarios typical of taster/starter sessions will be used, performed in a very sheltered water environment. The tutor must undertake thorough risk assessments before deliberately putting paddlers into high risk situations, and choose scenarios that enable them to assess safely and effectively. Tutors can supplement their observations with questioning to further explore the learner's ability to perform rescues in real situations. Appropriate safe handling must be adhered to at all times.

The following rescues are required:

### **3.1 Recover a capsized paddler and their equipment from deep water:**

Learners are required to show that they can rescue a capsized canoeist, kayaker and stand up paddleboarder from deep water:

1. recover a capsized canoeist and their equipment;
2. recover a capsized kayaker (sit on top, closed or open cockpit) and their equipment;
3. recover a stand up paddleboarder and their equipment.

The learner must start from 10 metres away, approach and then show that they can right, (and empty, appropriate to craft) that is upside down, and help a participant who is in difficulty get back in/on their craft from deep water. Being able to recover the scenario without retreating to shore is considered a core skill for Paddlesport Instructors. To support appropriate

manual handling, for the recovery of a canoe, assistance must be used – providers should ensure this rescue is appropriately briefed before the rescue takes place. The skill must be practised and action planned for development if required.

The learner should have stabilised the situation within 3-minutes of the swimmer capsizing/falling into the water, including:

- the swimmer is out of the water;
- the swimmer's boat/board is under control;
- the swimmer's paddle is under control;
- the craft has been righted and emptied.

Scenarios should reflect common situations that might take place in a taster/starter session. This may include a swimmer in a varying state of calm/anxiety, or with varying degrees of flexibility or agility. The learner must choose the most appropriate method of rescue for the particular craft/situation.

### **3.2 Recover a swimmer to shore using a boat/prone board-based rescue:**

Learners are required to use a boat/prone board-based tow or carry to rescue a swimmer from deep water. The learner must start 50 metres away from the swimmer and return them to the shore 50 metres away. The learner should have got the swimmer to shore within 3-minutes of them having entered the water.

Note: SUP prone board rescue is carried out without the use of a paddle.

### **3.3 Recover an upright incapacitated paddler to the shore:**

1. recover an upright, incapacitated canoeist to the shore;
2. recover an upright, incapacitated kayaker (sit on top, closed or open cockpit) to the shore;
3. recover an upright, incapacitated stand up paddleboarder to the shore;

The instructor is required to recover an upright, but incapacitated paddler to shore (covering a distance of at least 10 metres), using an appropriate method, e.g.:

- nudging/pushing the paddler to shore;
- bringing the paddler into/onto their own boat/board;
- use of slings, webbing or other improvised systems for towing;
- use of purpose made tow lines;
- towing from the body, the boat/board, paired or rafted boats.

The learner can choose their preferred towing system and must demonstrate it being set-up, used, and released in a safe/timely fashion. The learner should have recovered the paddler to shore within 2-minutes from the start of the rescue.

Scenarios should reflect common situations that might take place in a taster/starter session. For example, to help someone who is injured, tired, struggling to manoeuvre or has lost their paddle.

### **3.4 Rescue an unconscious kayaker from an upturned, closed cockpit kayak:**

Learners are required to show that they could rescue an unconscious paddler from an upturned, closed cockpit kayak. Learners are expected to respond safely and quickly, choosing an appropriate rescue, focusing on first time success from the following:

- the rescuer enters the water to recover the casualty;
- the rescuer enters the water, reaches over and rights the upturned kayaker;
- rescuer in/on their boat/board reaches over and rights the upturned kayaker.

The rescuer should have stabilised the situation within 1-minute of the incident, including that an unconscious paddler would have an open airway, called out for help and the situation has been stabilised. It is expected that the learner can then return to the shore no more than 10 metres away with the casualty.

Role play scenarios should reflect situations that may occur in a taster/starter session. For example, injury or illness resulting in loss of consciousness. Whilst this should be an unusual occurrence, the actions of the instructor could be lifesaving.

In the scenario it is acceptable for the rescuer to be positioned close to the upturned kayaker, to focus on the assessment of their ability to rescue the paddler (rather than their manoeuvring skills which are assessed elsewhere).

### **3.5 Rescue an entrapped paddler from a capsized canoe:**

Learners are required to show that they could help an entrapped paddler free themselves from a capsized canoe. Learners are expected to use a problem solving approach that might include, for example:

- quick action to stabilise the situation and ensure the capsized paddler has an open airway;
- giving instructions/support to the person trapped;
- physically helping the person free themselves.

The instructor should have stabilised the situation within 1-minute of the incident.

In the scenario it is acceptable for the rescuer to be positioned close to the upturned canoeist, to focus on the assessment of their ability to rescue the capsized paddler (rather than their manoeuvring skills which are assessed elsewhere).

### **3.6 Capsize and perform an effective self-rescue in deep water:**

The instructor is required to demonstrate the ability to recover if they capsize fully (craft upside down/flipped over) in deep water whilst in charge of a group. The learner is expected to choose an appropriate rescue for the craft/situation they are in:

- exit the boat/board in deep water, and get back in/on;
- exit the boat/board in deep water, and swim 10 metres to the shore;
- a T rescue or a roll are also acceptable alternatives.

When exiting the boat/board in deep water, learners can either get back on/in or choose to swim to the shore. When choosing to get back on or on their craft, they may direct an assistant to help stabilise/empty their craft. Whilst not all of the water needs to be emptied from the boat, it must be stable enough to paddle in control to shore.

If the learner chooses to swim to the shore as a self-rescue, then both craft and paddle must be retained by the learner when returning to the shore.

For the T rescue, learners are required to use either a bow or paddle presentation to bring themselves upright after capsizing (success should be achieved on the first attempt).

In all cases, learners must be able to recover themselves, whilst able to look after the group, to the point where they can continue their instructional responsibilities.

Scenarios should reflect situations that may occur in a taster/starter session; for example, accidentally capsized or capsized whilst playing games.

## **The Appeals Procedure**

### **Appeals Arrangements**

Whenever Delivery Centres or candidates do not agree with BCAB assessment decisions or other decisions affecting them, they may lodge a formal appeal. Whether it is the centre or the candidate wishing to appeal, an appeal must always be submitted in writing by the Delivery Centre and clearly outline the reason why it is being submitted. Candidates should note that appeals must go through the appropriate process, and it is more than likely that these are resolved at an assessor and Delivery Centre level. For such a process, candidates should contact the specific Delivery Centre that is responsible for the assessment, rather than the Delivery Centre they are registered, if this is different. Appeals on a British Canoeing Awarding Body decision should be made within one month of the decision having been made and should be directed to the BCAB Responsible Officer. At this stage, due to an appeal against a decision made either by the Responsible Officer or the

British Canoeing Awarding Body Committee, the appeal will be elevated to the Governance Department for an independent review and decision.