

4 Star Touring Leader Assessment Notes

Technical Syllabus

Please note - the provider should use their discretion on elements of the syllabi when due to the craft being paddled, the syllabi request something inappropriate. For example; high kneeling sprint canoe paddlers are not set up to perform skills on both sides; paddlers using composite boats should be allowed reasonable adjustments to rescues to allow them to complete the task without damaging their craft.

Part A - Personal Paddling Skills

The paddler will demonstrate the ability to skilfully control their chosen craft in the prescribed conditions through blending their body, boat and blade positions. This will incorporate the application of the various practical techniques listed below. The paddler should keep their actions within the 'safety box' and perform strokes on both sides.

If the boat is fitted with a rudder, the provider must be satisfied that the paddler has the ability to get to safety if the rudder fails.

It is required that boats should be fitted with appropriate buoyancy (e.g. bulkheads or airbags), sufficient to support itself and equipment.

If the paddler is paddling a crewed boat, they should demonstrate a sound knowledge of the strokes they require their partner to be using; this can be demonstrated by verbal instructions to their crew. They should also demonstrate that they have ultimate control and take full responsibility for all and any decisions.

The emphasis for the paddler is that they have a holistic approach to their paddling. The manoeuvres and strokes should be blended as appropriate. The assessment should not be seen as a tick box of skills.

Paddlers are required to show all skills on both sides, and in each of the environments as appropriate.

A.1 Lifting, carrying, launching and landing

Demonstrate safe lifting and carrying techniques appropriate to moving the groups craft from a vehicle, trailer or boat rack to the launch site, using teamwork where necessary to limit the risk of accident and injury. The paddler should be able to understand and demonstrate safe lifting and carrying techniques. The paddler will be able to launch from a variety of situations to include (but not exclusively); waves, rocky foreshores, pontoons and a variety of riverbanks. The paddler should be aware of their impact on the environment and seek ways to minimise the risks.

A.2 Efficient and effective moderate open water skills

- Paddlers need to be able to paddle forward in an efficient and effective way for their craft through the assessment.
- Paddlers need to be able demonstrate that they have the ability to manoeuvre their craft in confined spaces and around the group as required by the conditions.
- Paddlers need to demonstrate that they have the ability to paddle with the wind and use it to their advantage.
- Paddlers need to demonstrate that they have the ability to paddle against / across the wind and use it to their advantage.
- Paddlers need to be able to right themselves back up whilst on the move to be able to prevent a capsize.

A.3 Efficient and effective moving water (river) skills

- Paddlers should be able to move around the river at ease and be able to demonstrate a variety of strokes and tactics to support this. These skills will include the following areas; upstream and downstream ferries / break in and out of simple eddies / moving around obstacles (bridge pillars, rocks etc.) appreciation of speed, angle and edge will affect all of the above manoeuvres.
- Paddlers need to be able to right themselves back up whilst on the move to be able to prevent a capsize.

A.4 Environmental concerns

- Paddlers should have the understanding and ability to use the environment.
- Paddlers should demonstrate their ability to line and track around and up or down obstacles.
- Paddlers will demonstrate a team approach to portaging skills.
- Paddlers should be able to use the wind to their advantage and should demonstrate sailing options as a solo paddler and as a raft.
- Paddlers must be aware of rafting issues of how to, when to and dangers associated with it.

A.5 Navigation

- Paddlers need to be able to navigate in open water. This will include the use of map and compass where they must have the ability to paddle on a bearing and use a map for fine navigation.
- Paddlers also need to have navigation skills on the river, which includes the ability to use a map and pinpoint their position accurately.
- Paddlers will demonstrate their ability to navigate across land to demonstrate evacuation routes.

Paddlers will demonstrate their ability to use and understand the environment from a map and navigate themselves and their group safely following the advice that avoidance is better than cure.

Part B – Rescue Skills

Throughout the assessment the paddlers need to be able to apply the skills learnt in their British Canoeing Foundation Safety and Rescue Training (FSRT) and skilfully adapt them for this environment.

Paddlers are required to demonstrate the management of effective rescues of open and closed cockpit kayaks, and canoes as a minimum.

The emphasis for the paddler is that they can be an effective leader of a team. This would include that they can look after themselves and others while paddling in the environments as stated.

Paddlers to act as the rescuer and be rescued.

B.1 Manage the application of appropriate boat and bank-based safety and rescue skills Open Water:

The paddlers should throughout all the rescues be able to retain all of their own equipment and plan what to do next.

- Self-rescue: the paddlers are required to demonstrate an effective self-rescue in their chosen craft.
- Deep water rescue: paddlers should have the ability to recover a similar craft as their own and put the casualty back in their craft ready to continue. Paddlers are required to demonstrate effective rescues of other craft, open and closed cockpit kayaks, and canoes as a minimum.
- Swamped raft: care should be taken while setting this up but paddlers need to show that they are aware of the issues and have an appreciation of the dangers involved. Paddlers are required to show through questioning and/or practical application that they can recover a swamped raft.
- Man over board while sailing: paddlers have to have solutions to deal with man over board while sailing. Paddlers are required to show through questioning and/or practical application that they can deal with a person overboard while sailing.
- Towing including rafted towing: paddlers are required to demonstrate effective tow systems for at least two different types of craft, including a rafted tow.
- Carrying a swimmer: paddlers are required to demonstrate an effective carry from their chosen craft.

B.2 Manage the application of appropriate boat and bank-based safety and rescue skills Moving Water:

- Throwline rescues: knowledge of where to stow the throwline, where to stand and throwing options to be in evidence. Paddlers are required to deal with a swimmer in moving water and effectively recover them using a throwline.
- Rescue of capsized paddler and equipment: paddlers need to be aware of what to do next and what happens with the rest of the group. Paddlers are required to rescue a capsized kayaker and canoeist in a section of moving water from their chosen craft.

- Trapped boat recovery: paddlers to have solutions to deal with kayaks and canoes that are trapped in the current. Given the environment paddlers are going to be operating in, simple and safe is key.

B.3 Incident management and first aid in the 4 Star environments

Paddlers are expected to be able to deal with an incident scenario, in both environments. Scenarios will involve incidents that involve people, equipment and/or rescues and may include:

- The process of maintaining an overview of the situation so that the safety and well-being of the whole group is never forgotten.
- Various strategies for group control, leadership styles and positioning.
- Moving groups in more challenging situations.
- Ability to judge the conditions and the standard of the group and make appropriate decisions about the planned route along with the need to modify plans as required.
- Incidents that involve people – e.g. seasickness, hypothermia and physical injuries to group members etc.
- Incidents that involve equipment – e.g. boat repair, paddle repair, lost hatch etc.
- Rescue scenarios.
- The necessity of carrying and having easily accessible a suitable means of summoning help in an emergency and a first aid kit, along with familiarity with the use of the first aid kit contents.

B.4 Effective team leader and team member in rescues and incidents

Paddlers to show that they have the competence to lead a team of paddlers during rescues a incidents. They need to show this in both environments.

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

The paddlers should show they have the ability to lead others on a successful trip / tour in both of the stated environments. Paddlers will be working from their chosen craft, and assessed leading a group of paddlers in a variety of craft (including at least one canoeist and one kayaker). At assessment groups will normally include 4 paddlers, who are approximately 3 Star Standard in their chosen craft.

These skills will be blended throughout the assessment, and include:

C.1 Skilful application of leadership principles (e.g. CLAP) to include both on and off the water activities

Paddlers should have the ability to create confidence to their group members and provide sufficient information in order to achieve the days proposed objectives when faced with a more challenging situation.

For example the paddler may need to guide group members around small headlands where conditions have increased or lead a particular stretch of river where line of sight is challenging. This may also include scouting hazards, portaging sections and dealing with heavy boats.

C.2 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision-making to include how to deal with being caught out overnight

Paddlers need to understand and demonstrate different leadership strategies and be aware of the actions that could result from their decision. Providers therefore need to look at decision-making processes as well as the understanding of the environments involved.

This will include identifying hazards and picking suitable lines on the river and open water and planning in the case of an enforced overnight and an understanding of the consequences or show a strategy to avoid this happening.

Paddlers will also need to show and understand how to communicate effectively within the group.

C.3 Safety awareness and risk management

Paddlers need to demonstrate risk management, group and personal safety issues where dealing with the following - picking up swimmers from both the boat and bank, man overboard from a raft, trapped boats on a river, trapped paddler on a river and efficient deep water rescues.

C.4 Group control and dynamic management

Paddlers will need to demonstrate sound judgement to lead a group in the required environments.

C.5 Equipment

Be able to link theoretical understanding with practical application. Paddlers will demonstrate how to evaluate any equipment they use and the importance of how it should be maintained and carried or worn when in use. To include:

- Personal clothing, spare clothing and waterproof kit bag.
- Simple first aid kit, repair kit and emergency equipment for personal use.
- Sling, karabiner, whistle, throwline, towline and an appropriate knife: have knowledge of practical uses of each and where to keep them.
- Food for the trip(s) to be undertaken.
- Paddlers should demonstrate the importance of good hydration and the benefits that might be gained from a hot drink.
- Spare paddle(s): paddlers will have available spare paddle(s) appropriate for the craft and conditions.
- Suitable equipment with which to summon outside assistance: paddlers will have the means to call for outside assistance and be aware of how to use it/them and the limitations.

Note: paddlers should be made aware that they have a free choice of the craft they use for this award; however they will be required to take whole assessment in the same craft. Any equipment borrowed for the purpose at the time of assessment will be treated as the paddlers own.

C.6 Intervening strategies

Paddlers to show that they have strategies to solve potential problems early, before they become an issue. This may include:

- The skilful application of the CLAP leadership model.
- The decision to rest / scout or portage.
- The decision to change tactics or techniques.

C.7 Controlling and managing outcomes

Paddlers to show that they have strategies to change the outcome of the journey. This may include:

- Route planning and trip choice.
- Change of route plan in either of the stated environments.
- Use of emergency action plans.
- Use of safety briefs.

Part D – Theory

Paddlers should demonstrate that they are aware of potential risks, safety precautions and safety thresholds pertinent to leading groups on moderate open water, sheltered tidal water and moving water with a discernible green flow.

The emphasis of the assessment is that paddler can show the required knowledge required of an intermediate paddler. This should be blended throughout the assessment; topics are assessed via application and/or questioning.

D.1 Equipment

- Paddlers will demonstrate knowledge and experience of using a range of equipment including the most up-to-date. They should also have an understanding of how and why modern equipment has evolved and which use each piece of equipment best serves.
- Be able to link the theoretical understanding outlined above with its practical application. Know how to evaluate any equipment they use and the importance of how it should be maintained and carried or worn when in use.
- Paddlers should identify their policy on Buoyancy aid and helmets. Buoyancy aids and helmets are not compulsory but the ability to risk assess their use, or otherwise, should be demonstrated.

D.2 Safety

- Paddlers will be able to show they are aware of the dangers and problems associated with paddling on moving water, and the position that should be adopted if swimming in fast moving water.
- Paddlers will show they have an understanding of simple solutions to common problems that they may encounter whilst paddling moving water and larger sections of open water.

- Paddlers should demonstrate dynamic risk assessments for themselves and the group.

D.3 Weather

- Paddlers need to demonstrate.
- That they are aware of any likely effect and interaction of any current and wind and that fetch can affect things as well.
- That they are aware of a variety of sources of weather forecast. Be able to interpret such weather forecasts and be mindful of the conditions actually.
- That they know and can call outside agencies.

D.4 Hypothermia and First aid

Paddlers are required to hold a relevant first aid award

It should be evident that they can deal with an incident that may arise and see it through to its conclusion, including simple evacuations, dealing with emergency services and group care.

D.5 Access

Paddlers will demonstrate that they are aware of the range of access issue that exist throughout the UK and where they can find additional information.

D.6 Environment

Demonstrate an appreciation of the environment we paddle in is a key underpinning principle for many in paddlesport. Paddlers will demonstrate an awareness of how to protect it.

Demonstrate a level knowledge of typical flora and fauna expected to be found in the trip environments.

D.7 Planning for an overnight camp; including leader's equipment and how to deal with being caught out

- The paddler should be able to prepare for a planned overnight trip.
- The paddler should be able to demonstrate planning a day journey in an unfamiliar area using appropriate resources i.e. maps and river guides etc.
- The paddler needs to know what questions to ask themselves and others and how to go about organising a day out both on and off the water and produce a route plan that can be communicated to others including the group.
- The paddler should understand what is involved in planning a trip down a river such as access and egress, equipment requirements, significance of a weather forecast, shuttle procedures, lunch stops and contingency plans and escape routes.
- Paddlers should show knowledge of what equipment they would need to carry for being caught out overnight.

D.8 Portaging skills

Paddlers to demonstrate an understanding of what is involved if they were to portage a particular stretch of river or headland. This will include group management, equipment issues and how to work as a team to solve the problem.

D.9 Group awareness and management

Demonstrate being a productive member of a paddling group.

Paddlers need to know what questions to ask themselves and others and how to go about organising a day out both on and off the water.

D.10 Dealing with outside agencies

Paddlers should show a knowledge and understanding of what is involved when dealing with outside agencies such as rescue teams, ambulance service or the police. This will include how to contact them, the best means to do this, and what information they may require.

D.11 Navigation

The paddler will demonstrate a knowledge of Navigation and the use of a Map and Compass and should be able to pinpoint at any time during the assessment where they are.

The paddler should be able to work out an escape route using a map.

D.12 Etiquette

Paddlers should promote a positive image for paddlesport with other water users and local residents.

D.13 General

Paddlers should show a sound understanding of:

- The types of canoeing in which they are involved, and know something about the range of activities, which the sport incorporates.
- Of the history of paddlesport and current developments.
- Knowledge of the advantages, range and application of specific equipment e.g. kayaks skegs and rudders, canoes, paddles, clothing and safety equipment.

D.14 Leadership responsibilities

Paddlers should have a clear understanding of their responsibilities as leader, especially with minors.

D.15 Water features and hazards

Paddlers will demonstrate an awareness of all water features likely to be encountered as well as features that could become hazards and how to manage the risk these hazards present.

D.16 Personal paddling skills

Paddlers to demonstrate an awareness of the areas such as paddler's safety, injury management and Fundamental Paddlesport Skills (posture, connectivity, power transfer and feel).