

BCU FOUR STAR SEA KAYAK LEADER AWARD – Leadership Award **not** a coaching award/unsuitable for introducing beginners

Aim: Indicates a person capable to lead a group of 4 competent paddlers (ie who do not need coaching) on short (6-8 miles, 3hrs) trips up to moderate conditions –wind not exceeding force 4 sea state 4. Judge conditions and group to make decisions about route along with the need to modify plans as required

Pre-requisites:

- Over 16 at assessment, candidates under 18 can take the assessment but cannot be deemed responsible until they turn 18
- Be able to paddle 15-20 miles per day in 3 star conditions
- First Aid (min 8hrs) including CPR
- Evidence of 10 sea trips (min 4hrs duration) 5 as assistant leader –variety of coastline, sea states, sea areas, limited visibility, tide up to 3knots, wind up to Force 4, camping from kayak, sit on tops & doubles
- 3* Sea + 4* Training – at least 2 days formal training although 5 days more appropriate, + Coastal Nav

Craft and equipment –knowledge of practical use of all equipment

- Sea Kayak, paddle& split paddle
- Personal and Group equipment appropriate to the remit of the award and for the location.

Appropriate **personal clothing** relative to the prevailing conditions, **spare clothing and waterproof kit bag, buoyancy aid and helmet** – understand CE , helmet considerations, **simple first aid kit, repair kit, tow line and emergency equipment for personal use** – simple but effective solutions to common or likely incidents, **packed lunch and drink shelter& bivibag suitable equipment to summon outside assistance towline, knife, whistle, appropriate navigation equipment**

Assessment Venue: Must include sea state 4, rocky coastline with landings every 1-2 miles, difficult landing areas, land/launch through 1 metre surf

Duration: 18 hours **Assessor Ratio:** 1:4 **Assessor:** BCU A4 Assessor

Part A -Personal Paddling Skills – able to perform all skills on both sides, in Force 4/5 sea state 4, rudders disabled

A.1 Lift, carrying and launch/land *awareness of boat packing techniques, variety of conditions - rocky shore mod surf*

A.2 Efficient and Effective Sea paddling skills

- Forward Paddling
- Reversing and stopping
- Maintaining direction
- Changing direction
- Moving sideways
- Supporting

Paddle size and shape to sustain efficient forward paddling. Accurate & efficient backward paddling.

Ability to handle kayak in waves and wind from all directions and interface between flow and eddy.

Support strokes in realistic conditions –surf, waves, rough water.

A.3 Rolling In sea state 4, any effective roll, not set up- no nose clip except for medical reasons

A.4 Practical navigation

Interpreting maps, charts and sources of tidal info. Simple techniques to navigate safely (avoiding danger) along coastlines and 2nm crossings and in poor visibility – dead reckoning, tidal timing & compass. GPS if carried used to **aid** navigation & obtain fix.

Part B – Rescue Skills

B.1 Demonstrate skillful application of appropriate boat and rescue skills

- Rescue capsized paddler and equipment
- Self rescue
- Towing
- Carrying
- Shepherding

Self rescue in calm conditions. Range of rescues adapted to prevailing conditions, deal with incapacitated paddlers, tandem, rafted, contact, anchored, tows including paddler needed non-towing support. Reasonable distance, following, beam, quartering seas and wind from all directions –demo quick release under load –aware of dangers of towing

B.2 Effective team leader and team member in rescue/incidents, *deal with any incident could occur during a journey*

Part C – Safety, Leadership and Group skills

- C.1 Skillful application of leadership eg CLAP principles
- C.2 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision-making
- C.3 Safety awareness and risk management
- C.4 Group control and management
- C.5 Incident management

Maintain overview to ensure safety of group. Variety of leadership/group control styles and positioning. Moving groups in challenging situations, ability to judge group & conditions to decide on route and modify plans. Incidents to include people (seasickness, hypothermia, injuries), equipment (boat/paddle repair, lost hatch), rescue (different circumstances & conditions require variety of approach). Passing on tips and info to improve paddling ability eg encourage group around small headlands Suitable means of summoning help –flares, mobile, VHF First Aid kit for use afloat and more substantial ashore Repair kit for use afloat and more substantial ashore

Part D – Theory

- D.1 Equipment *know range and applications of sea specific – kayaks, skegs ,rudders, towlines, emergency communication and navigations, if VHS carried must hold licence*
- D.2 Safety *includes coastguard and rescue services*
- D.3 Weather *interpret various sources of forecast, understand impact of weather on sea conditions*
- D.4 Hypothermia/First Aid *Sound, safe judgement dealing with an incident and seeing it through – simple evacuations, emergency services and group care – complement other first aid*
- D.5 Access *access issues throughout UK and sources of information +freedom to paddle on sea*
- D.6 Environment *appreciation/enjoyment of natural environment and protect it, flora/fauna knowledge*
- D.7 Planning *able to plan day journey in unfamiliar area, pilots ,charts ,maps-route plan communicated to Coastguard*
- D.10 Navigation
- D.8 Group awareness and Management *Organising a group both on and off water-questions to ask self/others*
- D.11 Other water users *collision regulations and signals*
- D.12 General *History of sea kayaking, current developments*
- D.13 Leadership Responsibilities *legal and moral responsibilities of a leader – to group, club & BCU*
- D.14 Water Features/Hazards *include tidal planning*