

3 Star Open Canoe - Assessor Notes

Refer also to the syllabus and training notes

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

A.1 Lifting, carrying and launching/landing

Demonstrate the principles of safe lifting and carrying throughout the assessment. Launch & land at a variety of environments minimising damage to the bank.

A.2 Efficient forward paddling.

Demonstrate a fluent and adaptive forward paddling technique throughout the assessment.

- **Trim.** Appropriate trim to the prevailing conditions must be in evidence throughout the assessment. The assessment should include travel in a number of directions relative to winds up to force 2-3 in order for the candidate to demonstrate this understanding. A triangular course would fulfil this role but need not be performed as a separate task if appropriate travel has been incorporated elsewhere in the assessment. The candidate(s) can use either themselves or any load carried to set the most appropriate trim.
- **Acceleration.** Demonstrate the ability to accelerate the canoe from both a stationary position and whilst on the move within 3-4 strokes. The need for a vertical paddle shaft should be appreciated as well as a short, sharp correction to keep the boat on course.
- **Cruising.** Stern (or solo) paddler should demonstrate a fluent and rhythmic forward paddling stroke that will predominantly be a J-stroke. This can be adapted to deal with the appropriate prevailing conditions. The demonstration will be over a distance of about 500m (throughout the test) and will show good speed and control.
- **Knifed Strokes.** Predominately demonstrate i.e. either a knifed J or Indian stroke, but at times the candidate may need to use another stroke or technique in order to keep the boat under control.

A.3 Efficient reverse paddling.

Reverse paddling should be assessed in a sheltered environment. Candidates should demonstrate a fluent and adaptive reverse paddling technique throughout the assessment.

- **Trim.** Appropriate trim to the prevailing conditions must be in evidence throughout the assessment. The assessment should include travel in a number of directions relative to the wind in order for the candidate to demonstrate this understanding. A triangular course would fulfil this role but need not be performed as a separate task if appropriate travel has been incorporated elsewhere in the assessment. The candidate(s) can use either themselves or any load carried to set the most appropriate trim.
- **Stopping and Acceleration.** Demonstrate the ability to stop the canoe and then accelerate in reverse within 1-2 boat lengths.
- **Control over a figure-of-8 course.** Paddlers should demonstrate a fluent and rhythmic reverse paddling stroke, the steering element of which will predominantly be a reverse J-stroke. This can be adapted to deal with the appropriate prevailing conditions. The demonstration will be over a distance of about 500m (throughout the test) and will show good speed and control.

A.4 Turns whilst on the move.

The following moves must be performed on both the on and off sides of the boat:

- **Tight turns.** Demonstrate a tight turn around a point, followed by acceleration in the new direction.
- **Open turns.** Demonstrate a more open turn where the momentum is maintained throughout the arc, with minimum loss of forward speed and using boat tilt in order to assist turning.

A.5 Moving sideways, both static and on the move.

Move the canoe sideways both toward and away from the paddle. The criteria for this movement will be a balanced application of the stroke by the paddler(s) to avoid rolling or yawing. From stationery, the canoe should be moved sideways for 10m in each direction. From a good cruising speed the candidate(s) should be able to sideslip at least a canoe's width in each direction to avoid an obstacle and maintain forward speed.

A.6 Supporting.

Recover from a sudden tilt towards the paddle on both sides. Whilst performing this manoeuvre the water should reach the boats gunwales – allowances will be made for craft variation here.

A.7 Entering, crossing and exiting a simple flow.

Demonstrate crossing a simple flow from an eddy with appropriate angle, speed and edge with minimal loss of ground.

A.8 Poling.

Demonstrate the use of the pole in either shallow or deep water to propel the canoe over 25m as well as turning to the left and right.

A.9 Sailing.

Improvise and sail a downwind sailing rig for a tandem canoe. It must be evident that the improvised sail is having an effect on the boats movement. The canoe should remain on a reasonably straight downwind course with the stern paddler steering appropriately.

A.10 Securing.

Secure the canoe to the bank, pier, trailer, canoe rack or roof rack using appropriate knots, ropes or straps.

Part B – Rescue Skills

B.1 Capsize, swim and self rescue.

Capsize and climb back into the canoe (assistance can be provided by holding the gunwale). Recover self and equipment to shore over a distance of 20m.

B.2 Deep water rescue.

Perform an effective rescue of another canoeist and their upturned canoe, returning them to their canoe in deep water. The capsized paddler may assist as instructed by the candidate.

B.3 Towing and use of tow line.

Tow a canoe using a line. The tow must be over a distance of at least 25m and be released as for an emergency. Candidates must be aware of the dangers associated with towing.

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

C.1 Personal risk management

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Throughout the assessment candidates must demonstrate dynamic risk assessments.

C.2 Awareness of others

Throughout the assessment all candidates must show effective observation and communication within their group.

Part D – Theory

The assessor should satisfy themselves that the candidate has a good general knowledge of the open canoe under the following headings.

D.1 Equipment

Have knowledge and experience of using a range of equipment. Know how and why equipment has evolved and how best to use it.

D.2 Safety

Have a sound safety framework with use of practical, dynamic risk assessments.

D.3 Weather

Know how to understand and interpret weather forecast information from a variety of sources.

D.4 Hypothermia/first aid

Understand the factors that contribute to hypothermia and have strategies to avoid it. Be able to deal with the most likely paddlesport injuries.

D.5 Access

Be aware of the range of access issues throughout the UK and where additional information can be found.

D.6 Environment

An appreciation of the environment we paddle in should be a key underpinning principle for paddlers. Be aware of our environmental impact and be proactive in minimising this impact.

D.7 Planning

Know what questions to ask and how to go about organising a day out.

D.8 Group Awareness

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Be a productive member of a paddling group and understand different roles within a group of paddlers on the water.

D.9 General

Have a wide general knowledge of all aspects of the sport.

D.10 Navigation

Be able to use a map and compass to identify obvious features and identify your position.

D.11 Etiquette

Promote a positive image for paddlesports with other river users and local residents.

