

Course aims

This training course aims to provide paddlers with the key safety and rescue skills required to operate safely and to be able to deal with common emergencies. These skills form the foundations for safety and rescue throughout BCU qualifications.

The award has two purposes;

- To provide the paddler with the necessary skills which will enable them to ensure the safety of themselves and others
- To provide the paddler with the appropriate rescue skills which can be used to help themselves and/or others in difficulty

Course philosophy

Fundamentally this course is designed for all paddlers irrespective of their chosen craft. The objective is to teach simple and safe skills that can provide the paddlers with the tools to solve simple paddling problems.

Prerequisites

- Boat-based participants need to either hold the current BCU 2 Star Award or be of equivalent ability due to the paddling environment and the boat control required to complete the course
- Bank-based participants accessing the course are not required to hold the BCU 2 Star Award; however, they should be prepared to fully participate in all relevant aspects of the course
- Be able to swim in normal paddling clothing suitable for the prevailing conditions
- Be a minimum of 14 years of age

A first aid certificate is not a pre-requisite; however the holding of a first aid certificate is strongly recommended for all paddlers

Note for bank-based participants

The FSRT course is accessible by bank-based participants who will not be 2 Star standard. These candidates may be accessing the course to become a bank-based coach or to gain essential knowledge to assist with their clubs. Course providers should be aware of this and plan accordingly to ensure that the course caters for the needs of any bank-based participants attending.

The bank-based participant should be fully conversant with their abilities and in ensuring that they can deploy suitable strategies for safeguarding paddlers. They need to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses as a bank-based rescuer.

While not expected to take part as paddlers, bank-based participants should understand the rescues involved and be prepared to fully participate in the course. It is vital that they appreciate how a paddler may feel when in the water. One way for this is for the bank-based participant to be rescued from the water.

Equipment

The following is a list of recommended equipment required for the participant in this course to have;

- Towline OR tow system
- Throwline
- Webbing (sewn or unsewn sling) and large karabiner
- Whistle
- Knife

The course aims to allow the participants to experience a range of equipment, and to teach/coach the participant in ways to use the equipment as well as improvised systems.

Craft

The FSRT course has the ethos that the participants can problem solve at the end of the course. This would mean that they can find a solution to simple common paddling scenarios in flat/sheltered water regardless of the craft. Training will cover as many craft as possible and ensure that canoes and kayaks are covered on the training day;

- All boat-based rescues are practiced in canoe and kayak
- Participants will practice using canoes and kayaks most relevant to their normal coaching environment
- Participants should have problem solving ability to rescue unfamiliar types of craft

The emphasis throughout the course is for paddlers to be able to rescue like to like craft. I.e. rescue a canoe, from a canoe.

The training course is designed for all paddlers, including those who paddle any of the following boats;

- Any closed cockpit kayak (CCK)
- Any open cockpit kayak (OCK)
- Any fragile competition craft
- Any open canoe (OC)
- Any sit-on-top kayak or canoe (SOT)
- Any inflatable kayak or canoe (IKC)
- Any stand up paddle board (SUP)

The participant is required to have the appropriate paddling clothing suitable for their craft and the prevailing conditions.

Venue and duration

Sheltered water, calm conditions. The course will typically take place over a day and include at least 8 hours teaching time. See BCU Terms of Reference for definition of sheltered water, available from Home Nation websites.

Risk disclosure

All participants need to be aware of the risks associated with their involvement in rescue training. The course provider will endeavour to make participants aware of these by introducing and coaching ways to minimise the risks for all involved.

Course content

1. General theory and planning
 - a. Safety
 - b. Rescue protocols
2. Bank-based rescues
 - a. Coach a swimmer to shore
 - b. Rescue a swimmer with a rigid aid
 - c. Rescue a swimmer using a throw line
3. Boat-based rescues
 - a. Rescue a swimmer from the water
 - b. Rescue a capsized paddler using a deep water rescue
 - c. Rescue an unconscious or entrapped paddler from their boat
 - d. Use of towlines
 - e. Self-rescue
 - f. All-in rescue
4. Scenarios

