

4 Star Open Canoe - Training Notes

Refer also to the syllabus and assessing notes

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

A.1 Lifting, carrying and launching/landing

- Understand the principles of safe lifting and carrying.
- Look at how to communicate and ensure your group follow these principles.
- Moving and handling techniques – use and understand appropriate lifting and carrying techniques by sharing the load, spine in line, slide and glide.
- Launch & land at a variety of environments minimising damage to the bank.

A.2 Efficient and effective grade 2 river running skills

- **Upstream manoeuvres (ferries & S-turns).**
Discover the importance of speed, angle and boat tilt so that they are able to cross a consistent and moderate grade 2 flow with an effective ferry glide. During an effective ferry glide the boat should remain within the paddlers control and there should be minimal loss of height, their training should help them in achieving this. Explore the same factors crossing a current using s-turns.
- **Checking, setting and reverse ferry gliding.**
Checking involves slowing the descent of the canoe in anticipation of avoiding an obstacle, going for an eddy manoeuvre or moving to the bank. Setting is the initiation of a reverse ferry glide, and involves putting the appropriate ferrying angle on to go in the direction desired. Setting into eddies is achieved from facing downstream and by reverse ferry gliding into the eddy. Checking, setting and reverse ferry gliding should be used to alter the boats position on the river with a view to selecting a suitable line down a rapid and for avoiding obstacles. The candidate's training should also include the safe negotiation of bends where the main current runs under trees. Whilst demonstrating reverse ferry gliding, it is not envisaged that the candidate need enter and leave the main current, but rather that they should be able to perform the manoeuvres whilst in the main current. The training programme should include the opportunity to explore trim within the context of reverse ferries.
- **Eddy turns both into and out of the current.**
Understand the relationship between such factors as speed of current, size of eddy, tilt, trim and the desired position on the river after the manoeuvre. Consider the importance of initial positioning and the angle of the boat allied to the correct degree of tilt and trim that is appropriate for the particular eddy.

- **Supporting.**
Many of the above manoeuvres may lead to instability requiring a support stroke. Training should cover ways to deal with this including dynamic low or high support.

A.3 Efficient and effective open water skills

- **Paddle up, down and across a force 3-4 wind.**
Develop an appreciation of wind speed and direction and how it affects the boat. Understanding of how boat trim, paddling side, wind speed and direction affects performance. Experience a range of techniques to enable them to adjust their trim and optimise their performance e.g. their seating position, carrying a load etc. This awareness should include experience of winds of up to force 3-4 as well as paddling a range of types of canoe and whilst paddling solo and tandem. The use of a triangular course may be of use when developing this awareness of trim. Trim should be a key underpinning point throughout their training.
- **Sailing.**
Training should include construction of a simple downwind sailing rig for use with rafted boats. Students need to be made aware of all the key safety issues of rafting boats and then powering this raft with a sail.

A.4 Lining.

Develop an understanding of an appropriate line for the task, ie floating, clean line, long enough and comfortable to operate. Appreciate the context for lining on both moving and open water and use of various techniques to attach the line including bridles.

A.5 Poling.

Understand the practise of adopting the appropriate trim and an effective stance so that they can pole with the current, against the wind. Be introduced to simple upstream travel.

A.6 Navigation.

Be aware of how to use grid references, take and follow a bearing and identify simple contour features.

Part B – Rescue Skills

B.1 Demonstrate skilful application of appropriate boat and bank-based rescue skills:

Open Water rescues

- Self rescue - The candidate should experiment with a range of self rescue techniques which may involve using their own kit.

- Deep water rescue. - Be aware of the importance of safe lifting techniques. Candidates need to show techniques which allow them to perform the whole manoeuvre without assistance.
- Towing. - Experience a number of different ways to tow a canoe. Understand the importance of a releasable system and the inherent dangers of towing particularly with reference to moving water.

Moving Water Rescues

- Self rescue. – Know how swim lines are chosen, attached and utilised in self rescue.
- Throw line rescue. - Develop both the accurate deployment of the throwline in a range of situations and bracing appropriately when the load is applied.
- Boat recovery of person and equipment. – Understand the practical and safety issues when picking up a swimmer into the rescuers boat or shepherding a swimmer to the bank.

B.2 Incident management and first aid in the 4 star environment

Provide a range of simple training scenarios to illustrate issues likely to be encountered as a 4* leader (including calling emergency services)

B.3 Effective team leader and team member in rescue / incident

Utilise scenario the training to illustrate good practice.

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

Overall of this section is to develop an understanding that proactive paddling and avoidance is at the heart of an enjoyable and safe experience.

C.1 Skilful application of leadership (e.g. CLAP) principles**C.2 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision-making**

Learn how to be organised on the water and have the experience and judgment required to safely lead groups on grade 2 water. They will also be required to show experience in identifying hazards and in picking suitable lines for different designs of craft e.g. white water and touring boats.

Demonstrate effective group control.

Facilitate effective communications within a group.

C.3 Safety awareness and risk management**C.4 Group control and management**

Use and understand risk assessment, group management, judgement and safe paddling techniques for class 2 white water and open water.

C.5 Equipment

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.

Ideally through training the candidates will experience a wide range of both craft and paddles.

- Personal clothing, Spare clothing and waterproof kit bag. Develop the skills to choose appropriate personal clothing relative to the prevailing conditions. Have knowledge of suitable alternatives available and how it may be carried within their boat.
- Buoyancy aid and helmet. - Identify the key features of a suitable white water buoyancy aid and how it should be worn. Helmets are not compulsory but the ability to risk assess their use, or otherwise, should be developed.
- Simple first aid kit, repair kit and emergency equipment for personal use. – Know simple but effective solutions to, the most common or most likely incidence that they may have to deal with.
- Be able to choose appropriate food for the trips to be undertaken. They also need to be made aware of the importance of good hydration and the benefits that might be gained from a hot drink.
- Sling, Karabiner, whistle and an appropriate knife - Have knowledge of practical uses of each.

Part D – Theory

Gain background theory as appropriate throughout the training and be shown a list of information resources.

D.1 Equipment

Gain knowledge and experience of using a range of equipment including the most up to date. Also understand 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.

Ideally through training the candidates will experience a wide range of both craft and paddles.

Personal clothing, Spare clothing and waterproof kit bag - Develop the skills to choose appropriate personal clothing relative to the prevailing conditions. Have knowledge of suitable alternatives available and how it may be carried within their boat.

Buoyancy aid and helmet. - Identify the key features of a suitable white water buoyancy aid and how it should be worn. Helmets are not compulsory but the ability to risk assess the use or otherwise should be developed.

Simple first aid kit, repair kit and emergency equipment for personal use. – Know simple but effective solutions to, the most common or most likely incidence that they may have to deal with.

Be able to choose appropriate food for the trips to be undertaken. They also need to be made aware of the importance of good hydration and the benefits that might be gained from a hot drink.

Sling, Karabiner and an appropriate knife - Have knowledge of practical use of each.

D.2 Safety

Be aware of the dangers and problems associated with paddling on moving water, and the position which should be adopted if swimming in fast moving water. Have simple solutions to common problems that they may encounter whilst paddling moving water and larger sections of open water in open canoe. This should include undertaking dynamic risk assessments for them and the group they are paddling with.

D.3 Weather

Be aware of a variety of sources of weather forecast. Be able to interpret such weather forecasts and be mindful of the conditions actually experienced, showing an understanding of the impact of various weather conditions on the open water environment.

D.4 Hypothermia/first aid

Linked with sound safe judgement coaches should ensure students can deal with the most likely injuries that may occur as part of paddlesport activities on this grade of water. This training should complement any other first aid training where it exists.

D.5 Access

Become aware of the range of access issue that exist throughout the UK and where they can find additional information.

D.6 Environment

An appreciation of the environment we paddle in is a key underpinning principle for many in paddlesport. Know how to gain maximum enjoyment form this natural environment and how to protect it.

D.7 Planning

Understand of 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, contingency plans.

D.8 Group awareness and management

Become a productive member of a paddling group. Candidates 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.9 Navigation

Trained practically in navigation section – not therefore needed as theory

D.10 Etiquette

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

D.11 General

Be introduced to an understanding of the types of canoeing in which they are involved, and know something about the range of activities which the sport incorporates, together with an awareness of one or more of the competitive forms of canoeing which have World Championships or Olympic status, and Britain's performance in them.

D.12 Leadership Responsibilities

Students should have a clear understanding of their responsibilities as leader, especially with under 18s.

D.13 Water Features / Hazards

Training should include the identification 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.