

3 Star White Water – Assessor's Notes

Prerequisites

- Evidence of having paddled on grade 2 rivers.
This could be via a logbook or just verbal, but the assessor must question the candidate to ensure validity.
- Provide evidence of at least 3 journeys on sheltered water and 3 on moving water which should include short stretches of grade 2. Either 10km should have been covered or approx 4 hours spent on the river. The trips should be on different rivers or different sections of the same river
- The assessor should be confident that candidates have experienced a range of paddling environments. They should show evidence of having paddled these with a group (3 or more) of similar standard paddlers, as well as an experienced coach, so that group leadership/etiquette issues will have been seen/experienced in a variety of settings.

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills – flat water

A.1 Lifting, carrying and launching/landing

Candidates should demonstrate, with assistance, good lifting and carrying techniques appropriate to getting a kayak from or to a car roof rack or a trailer. Solo candidates should have assistance with lifting and carrying. As a progression from 2 star candidates should be able to launch safely and efficiently from any reasonable launching spot e.g. pier, steps and/or high riverbank. A seal launch is not acceptable.

A.2 Efficient forward paddling

The major progression from 2 star is the ability to now show a fluent and adaptive forward paddling technique throughout the assessment. A dynamic and safe posture should be evident with efficient and appropriate muscle groups used (note this will vary dependant on boat design and type of paddler).

Candidates should be able to hold their position whilst paddling forward in a clean deep shoot of water of no more than 3 mph for a maximum of 1 minute or better be able to paddle upstream on a simple grade 1 rapid.

Acceleration Candidates should demonstrate the ability to accelerate the boat from both a stationary position and whilst on the move within 3 or 4 strokes e.g. crossing a current and or moving in or out of an eddy.

Cruising A rhythmic and fluent forward paddling stroke should be evident. The demonstration will be over a distance of about 500m (throughout the test) and will show good speed and control.

A.3 Reverse over a figure of 8 course

Candidates should demonstrate a fluent and adaptive reverse paddling technique, throughout the assessment.

Stopping and Acceleration Candidates should demonstrate the ability to stop the kayak and then accelerate in reverse within a boat length.

Control over a figure-of-8 course Candidates should be able to reverse the kayak straight as well as turn to the right and left around the markers of a prescribed figure-of-8 course. (The course should be around buoys about 8 to 10m apart.) The boat should maintain a reasonable cruising speed throughout this task and there should be no or little loss of control.

A.4 Moving sideways, both static and on the move

Sculling draw. Both skills need to be performed on both sides.

Candidates should demonstrate efficient sideways movement over approx 5m; body well rotated, paddle shaft vertical and blade deep in the water. All must be in evidence without the kayak turning.

Draw on the move.

Whilst moving forward the candidates should pull the kayak sideways from its course at least a boats width (as if to avoid an obstacle) without turning. Forward paddling should be maintained after the draw stroke.

This could be performed with candidates paddling towards a buoy so that accurate performance can be measured and co-ordination skills have to be demonstrated by the paddlers.

A.5 Supporting, both static and on the move

Candidates should possess a range of support techniques in order to maintain balance in varied circumstances. Demonstration should include low and high recovery strokes, stationary and on the move and on both sides. The kayak should be off balance and the paddler should keep their actions within their 'safety box'.

A.6 Rolling

Candidates must be able to roll on flat water. One side only and a set up is allowable.

Practical skills on Moving water.

This should be conducted on a section of moving water of grade 1 to 2. The candidates need to be led down a section of grade 2 and they should be able to make easy eddies as directed by the leader. However on a section of grade 1 water they should perform the following skills competently;

A.7 Breaking in and out

Candidates should demonstrate the ability to choose a suitable technique to get into and out of eddies successfully, with effective use of speed, angle, edge, trim, timing, dynamic balance and good body rotation. With regard to body rotation looking for 'future water' when turning should be clearly evident. Eddies on both sides of the river should be used.

A.8 Ferry gliding

Candidates should demonstrate forward (upstream) ferry glides only. They should be able to cross a consistent grade 2 flow without any major loss of height, maintaining the ferry angle and also have the ability to make adjustments in ferry angles as required i.e. to cross eddy lines.

Part B – Rescue Skills**B.1 Deep-water rescue**

Candidates should have an effective rescue; it should be fast and safe and return them to their kayak in deep water within 3 minutes of capsizing.

The capsized paddler may assist as instructed. It is recommended that boats should be equipped with 'total' buoyancy (e.g. air bags)

B.2 Towing

Contact tow to move a tired paddler to a safe environment.

Candidate must be able to move a 'tired paddler' across a short distance of approximately 10m on flat or very gently moving water. A sling could be used appropriately if the paddler so wishes. A towline should not be allowed due to possible dangers of its use on moving water; awareness of a safe environment is key here.

B.3 Eskimo Rescue

Candidates should show a confident capsize with the rescuer moving in from 5m distance. A first time recovery must follow. Candidates should act as both rescuer and victim. Both styles of rescue should be shown (bow and paddle presentation) On a bow presentation a right angle approach is not acceptable.

B.4 Throw line

Candidates should demonstrate throwing a line to rescue a swimmer 10m from the bank. The line should preferably reach the swimmer first time and should be performed in a time limit of 1 minute from opening the bag. A dynamic and safe stance should be evident when the swimmer takes hold of the line.

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills**C.1 Personal risk management****C.2 Awareness of others****C.3 Paddle a section of grade 2 water as part of a led group**

All the above should be shown by candidates showing they have the experience and judgement required to safely operate as a group, on grade 1 water. All members of the group must be of a similar standard. They should show ability in identifying hazards and choosing suitable lines. As a group they should carry suitable equipment for a days journey and have good river 'etiquette' i.e. not hogging eddies or breaking out directly into the path of a descending paddler. Awareness is important here, both of what is happening to them and others around them. They do

not need to be responsible for others but they should work together and help each other through communication and physically moving out of the way to allow others to perform manoeuvres e.g. breaking in or out.

Part D**Theory:**

A question or two of a similar level should be asked under each heading

D.1 Equipment

Sample questions:

Can you name two different types of paddle?

What materials are most modern boats made from?

What is the main difference between a 'dry cag' and an ordinary cag?

D.2 Safety

Sample questions:

What clothing would you wear if you were going out paddling in the winter?

Why can 'strainers' on fast moving water be dangerous?

D.3 Weather

Sample questions:

Where can you get weather information from?

What are the important elements of a forecast with regards to safety of a river trip?

D.4 Hypothermia/first aid

Sample questions:

How do you prevent hypothermia?

What are the signs that someone is becoming hypothermic?

What are the most important things to do if someone is hypothermic?

D.5 Access

Sample questions:

What is an 'access agreement'?

How do you find out whom to ask permission from, when planning a river trip?

What does 'a riparian owner' mean?

D.6 Environment

Sample questions:

What is the most distressing/disturbing wildlife encounter you have had whilst canoeing?

What role do the EA play with regards to environmental factors?

D.7 Planning

Sample questions:

What average speed do you think you can travel at over a 4-hour journey in your kayak without any current or strong wind to help or hinder you?

What questions would you ask the leader if, as a 3 Star paddler, you were invited to take part in a day tour travelling about 12 miles down river?

D.8 Group Awareness *Sample questions:*

On which side of a navigable river or canal should you paddle? How would you raise the alarm if you were paddling at the back of a group and the person ahead of you capsized?

D.9 General

Sample questions:

Name two manufacturers or models of kayak, which are sold in Britain?

How does joining the British Canoe Union help you and help canoeing generally?

Who is Rob Roy Macgregor?

D10 Navigation

Sample questions:

On what type of journey may a compass be useful?

What sort of map is the best one to have with you for a journey on a river or canal?

D11. Etiquette

Sample questions:

Who has right of way when descending a rapid?

What should you do after entering an eddy and you have other paddlers descending the rapid, wanting to enter the same eddy.