

4 Star Sea Kayak Leader Syllabus

Aim

Successful performance at this level indicates that a candidate has the personal skill level and leadership ability required to lead a group of paddlers, on short (6 to 8 miles, of at least 3 hours paddling), single or multi-day journeys in a moderate tidal water environment with winds not exceeding Beaufort Force 4. The British Canoeing 4 Star Leader has the skills and judgement to select appropriate environments for paddlers with a range of experience.

The British Canoeing 4 Star Leader Award is a leadership award and not a coaching award.

Following assessment British Canoeing 4 Star Leaders must have in place civil liability insurance (included in comprehensive Home Nation membership), knowledge of Child Protection guidelines and good practice including checks where necessary and maintain evidence of currency.

Moderate Tidal Water/Sea Definition

A stretch of coastline with available landings every 1 to 2 miles or 1 hour paddling, including areas where it is not easy to land. Crossings not exceeding 2 nautical miles. Up to 2 knots of tide (but not involving tide races or overfalls). Winds not exceeding Beaufort Force 4. Launching and landing through surf (up to 1 metre, trough to crest height).

(Extracted from Terms of Reference)

NB: Wind scales and sea states used here are as advised by the Met Office.

Training and Assessment Courses

To achieve British Canoeing 4 Star Sea Kayak Leader candidates are required to attend British Canoeing 4 Star Sea Kayak Leader Training. This involves at least 2 days of formal training in personal skills, leadership, and safety and rescue. Some training courses also include the prerequisite British Canoeing Coastal Navigation and Tidal Planning course (extending the programme by an additional day). Training is valid for 3 years, during this time, and upon completion of the assessment prerequisites, candidates can then put themselves forward for assessment. Assessments are normally run over 2 days.

Related British Canoeing Policies

See 'Reasonable Adjustments for Paddlesports Awards and Coaching' for details about how providers can make adjustments for paddlers with specific disabilities

See 'British Canoeing Appeals Procedure' for details of how candidates can go about making an appeal or complaint about the conduct of a British Canoeing Star Award

See 'APL Guidance Notes' for details of how to apply for accredited prior learning. APL is mainly used to allow individuals access to a British Canoeing qualification where they do not hold the specific prerequisite for that award, but have equitable prior learning

Useful Information

Please refer to the British Canoeing 4 Star Sea Leader Training and Assessment Notes and the British Canoeing Star Award Guidance Notes for further information.

Training Prerequisites

- British Canoeing 3 Star Sea Kayak standard is the appropriate level of performance for paddlers to begin working towards the British Canoeing 4 Star Sea Kayak Leader.
- British Canoeing Coastal Navigation and Tidal Planning course or similar RYA course (for acceptable RYA alternatives see 'Using RYA Awards to APL British Canoeing Navigation and Tidal Planning Courses' available on the Home Nation websites). Some British Canoeing 4 Star Sea Kayak Leader Training courses include the British Canoeing Coastal Navigation and Tidal Planning course.

Assessment Prerequisites

- Home Nation British Canoeing 4 Star Sea Kayak Leadership Registration (LR)
- Valid (within 3 years) British Canoeing recognised 2 day first aid award (if first aid training was completed prior to 31/12/11, a recognised 8 hour first aid course is acceptable)
- Previous experience: provide documented evidence of 24 sea trips (minimum 4 hours duration). During at least 5 of these trips the candidate must assume an assistant leader role. The extensive range of sea kayak journeys should include a variety of coastlines, sea states, sea areas, periods of limited visibility and darkness, tidal waters up to 3 knots, wind up to and including Beaufort Force 5, crossings not exceeding 2 nautical miles, and camping from a kayak
- Valid (within 3 years) British Canoeing 4 Star Sea Kayak Leader Training

Candidates must be aged 16 or over at the time of assessment. Candidates under the age of 18 can take the award, but cannot be deemed responsible for leadership by law until they turn 18.

VHF Radio Requirements

All candidates are required to carry a VHF radio. The provider will assess radio protocol and that UK residents are aware of licencing requirements.

Craft

The British Canoeing 4 Star Sea Kayak Leader Award is designed for sea kayakers and the award must be undertaken in a sea kayak. A modern sea kayak could be described as a directionally stable closed cockpit kayak that is designed for the demands of open sea conditions, with internal buoyancy created by watertight bulkheads accessed through waterproof hatches. If the kayak is fitted with a rudder, it must be disabled for the duration of the assessment.

Equipment

Candidates should have personal and group equipment appropriate for the remit of the award and relevant to the assessment environment.

Trainer and Assessor

British Canoeing 4 Star Sea Kayak Leader Provider.

Assessment Venue

The choice of venue should give the opportunity for:

- Periods of no less than sea state 3-4 (or a tidal flow creating similar conditions)
- A rocky coastline with available landings at least every 1-2 miles and areas where it is not easy to land
- Launching and landing through small surf, less than 1 metre (trough to crest height)

Technical Syllabus

The candidate is required to perform all skills in moderate water conditions, on both sides (unless otherwise stated).

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

- A.1 Lifting, carrying, launching and landing
- A.2 Efficient and effective sea paddling skills:
- Forward paddling
 - Reversing and stopping
 - Maintaining direction
 - Changing direction
 - Moving sideways
 - Supporting
- A.3 Rolling in rough water (on one side only)
- A.4 Practical Navigation on the water and in poor visibility

Part B – Rescue Skills

- B.1 Have knowledge of, and demonstrate skilful application of, appropriate rescue skills
- B.2 Self-rescue
- B.3 Be conversant with different methods of towing

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

- C.1 Skilful application of leadership principles
- C.2 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision-making
- C.3 Safety awareness and risk management
- C.4 Exercise appropriate group control and management and show concern for the general welfare of other group members
- C.5 Demonstrate the capability to manage a range of incidents
- C.6 Provide guidance through top tips and handy hints

Part D – Theory

- D.1 Equipment and design
- D.2 Safety (includes Coastguard and rescue services)
- D.3 Weather
- D.4 Wellbeing, health and first aid
- D.5 Access
- D.6 Environment
- D.7 Planning
- D.8 Group awareness and management
- D.9 General knowledge
- D.10 Navigation
- D.11 Collision regulations and signals
- D.12 Leadership responsibilities
- D.13 Water features and hazards