



Australian Canoeing

Education and Safety Technical Committee

Award Scheme Handbook

Australian Canoeing Award Scheme 2008

20 December 2012



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Principal Sponsor



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Australian Sports Commission

Recent Amendments

The Australian Canoeing Award Scheme is under constant review and revision to keep it relevant to the needs of paddlers. Recent amendments are:

15 September 2011

Sea Rescue endorsement (page 57)

Sport and recreation authorities in some states have requested a separate sea rescue award, as with whitewater. The Sea Rescue endorsement is a one day training program for proficient sea paddlers focusing on group rescue skills. Like the Surf Bronze it works to ensure leaders are kept current in rescue techniques and have shown recent proficiency.

19 August 2012

Throughout, specific prerequisites may be replaced by equivalent skills and knowledge.

Units relating to multi-day and overnight expeditions have been removed from Guide and Instructor awards and placed into the Overnight Camping Endorsement (p 23). This change makes it easier for would-be Guides and Instructors who will be working only on single day activities to become qualified.

Introduction to Sea Skills

This award has been reintroduced (p 41).

Club Leader

This award has been discontinued.

Flatwater Instructor

Requirements to train trainers have been deleted.

Whitewater Rescue awards

Suggested equipment lists have been added.

Sea Instructor

Requirements to train trainers have been deleted, and understanding of leadership styles added.

20 December 2012

Explanatory paragraphs added to page 2, new definitions to page 3, Experience component of Flatwater Lifeguard (page 16) revised, and 'verified' relating to log books changed to 'verifiable' throughout.

Cover picture

Brock Flowers in the second gorge of the Wingecarribee in the Southern Highlands of NSW.
Photograph by Lachie Milne.

Australian Canoeing: Award Scheme Handbook

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About Australian Canoeing and the Award Scheme

Australian Canoeing is the peak national canoeing body recognised by the Federal government, and the Australian Canoeing Award Scheme (ACAS) is the national benchmark for canoeing, formulated over many years as the collective work of paddlers of authority and experience. Quality assurance of the ACAS is provided by Australian National coaches. The Scheme presents the highest standards of skills and safety to the general public, recreational paddlers, commercial operators and administrative officials.

Canoeing is an excellent sport and recreation carried out in Australia on most waters from the sea through canoeing venues, flat rivers and white water. Paddling is carried out both by individuals or groups of friends or family, supervised or unsupervised. The Award Scheme has been created for paddler development in both skills and knowledge to enrich paddlers' enjoyment of the sport and to develop safe practices amongst all paddlers. ACAS is not intended to restrict the ability of paddlers to operate within their self-defined skill set, but those paddlers who have unrealistic ideas of their abilities and through ignorance operate unsafely are not the responsibility of Australian Canoeing. Australian Canoeing has created ACAS as a means of educating all paddlers.

The Scheme is designed to allow anyone to enter at any level. The Skill Awards are milestones that many may choose to ignore even when they are operating at skill levels above those stipulated. The Skill Awards, however, help define minimum paddling skills for those who wish to guide or instruct. The Guide and Instructor Awards represent industry quality paddling awards recognised throughout Australia for use in industry, education and clubs.

The Skill Awards are more than just competency based. Holders of a given skill award have a well-tested and Australia-wide moderated set of paddling skills that allow those paddlers to operate confidently and safely within their tested conditions. Instructor Awards are given only to those who have demonstrated higher skills, good teaching abilities and leadership qualities through examination.

Australian Canoeing appoints assessors after they have completed an AC Assessor course. These people are Instructors in their own right who have additional experience and an ability to judge the standards of paddlers.

ACAS is administered through a network of National Training Providers (NTPs), which are required to adhere to a strict set of training and assessment criteria that meet national safety standards and exceed VET requirements.

ACAS 2008 is no longer aligned with the VET Outdoor Recreation Package to ensure greater simplicity, transparency and quality of delivery, and to better serve the needs of the paddling industry, as well as those of AC-affiliated clubs. Safety, instruction and assessment standards are tied back to a single national benchmark and moderation process.

Australian Canoeing is maintaining a pathway to VET recognition for Instructors in all contexts via the AC Education and Safety Technical Committee.

The Award Scheme is reviewed every three years, and Australian Canoeing welcomes input into the scheme. Comments and criticisms may be directed to the Education and Safety Committee who wrote the Award Scheme for consideration and elucidation. Contact with the Education and Safety Committee can be made directly through the Australian Canoeing website.

The Australian Canoeing website provides resources to expand the ACAS to members of Australian Canoeing.

Definitions

'AC' means Australian Canoeing Inc.

'Corequisite' Where an AC rescue award is called for, a demonstration of the necessary rescue skills during the assessment process will be adequate.

'Guide' A person who leads or guides a group without the intention of imparting skills or knowledge beyond that which is necessary to participate safely and adequately in the activity. At the end of a session or program with a guide, the intent is not for the participant to have acquired the skills to independently participate in the activity.

'ICF' means the International Canoe Federation.

'Instructor' A person who facilitates skill transfer or development to participants in order that they may act independently or with minimal supervision. This requires the instructor to be able to critique technique, apply a variety of appropriate instructional strategies and may require them to assess participant's skill acquisition at the end of a program or session.

Instructor awards include all the elements of related Guide awards.

'Leader' A person giving direction to a group. This includes Instructors, Guides, trip leaders, peer leaders, Scout leaders, group leaders, etc.

'Participant' A person who has the necessary competencies to participate independently or under supervision in an outdoor activity. The ability to demonstrate participatory skills to the appropriate standard is a pre-requisite to performing as a Guide or Instructor in outdoor recreation.

'Peer Activity' A paddling activity where no instructional or guiding structure exists and it is the responsibility of each member of the group to ensure the suitability of their equipment and themselves for the activity.

'Prerequisite' Where an AC paddling skill award is called for, a demonstration throughout the assessment process will be adequate.

'Re-registration' The process of renewing Guide or Instructor awards at their three year expiry by providing evidence of continued participation at the appropriate level.

'Skill Award' Skill Awards are a demonstration that a paddler has achieved a certain level of skills and knowledge, and are prerequisites for training to Guide and Instructor awards. They have no expiry date, and it is the responsibility of holders to maintain skill and expertise to be able to participate at the appropriate level.

Lack of a Skill Award in no way precludes any paddler from paddling within their limits and should not be seen as a necessary requirement for paddling. It is merely a formal statement of demonstrated skills.

'VET' Vocational Education and Training.

Assessment

Overarching methodology

The assessment of an ACAS award should be performed in as near real conditions as possible and should be designed to clearly confirm the ability of a candidate to perform at the award level in other circumstances.

The ACAS is not a VET qualification, however its standards of information, training and assessment meet or exceed that required by the Outdoor Recreation Training Package, and a path for recognition under that scheme is maintained via Australian Canoeing.

All assessments must be conducted by a current Australian Canoeing Assessor whilst in the employment or under contract to a current AC National Training Provider (organisation).

Assessments must follow the standards set out under Assessment Standards below.

Assessment must also be consistent with VET Nationally Recognised Training standards set out below.

Nationally consistent

Individuals expect that they can use the skills from ACAS qualifications across Australia and employers expect that the staff they hire have the same skills no matter where they were assessed. It is important that assessment is not contextualized to a level that makes it non-transferable.

Streamlined

The standards for ACAS and NTPs have been simplified and streamlined to focus on outcomes. ACAS 2008 places the emphasis on providing a sound development tool to the non-competitive kayak and canoe world.

Transparent

National guidelines and handbooks are readily accessible to all AC NTPs.

Copyright

All ACAS resources are copyright Australian Canoeing and exclusively for the use of ACAS Award holders working within the National Training Provider Structure. All other use, copying or distribution requires written permission from Australian Canoeing.

Assessor requirements

To become an ACAS Assessor candidates must apply to AC.

ACAS Assessors are appointed by AC for a period of three years.

Assessors are able to assess up to those awards for which they have held the equivalent level instructor for a minimum of one year.

ACAS Assessor candidates must:

- Be at least 18 years of age

- Have operated as an AC Instructor for at least one year

- Have paddled for at least three years

- Hold a current first aid certificate

- Have delivered at least components of three Instructional programs under the direction of an NTP

- Have observed or assisted in three AC assessment programs.

It is highly desirable that Assessor candidates hold an assessor qualification or training such as (TAA, BSZ, Workplace Assessor, etc.)

Assessor application process

Candidates for appointment as AC Assessors must apply in writing to AC. The application is to include:

- Copies of the paddler's logbook for the past three years
- A letter from a third party verifying the logbook
- A letter from an NTP supporting the application. This letter must include the following:
 - Duration of knowledge of the applicant
 - Areas where the applicant has been observed
 - Programs in which the applicant has been observed instructing
 - Programs in which the applicant has been observed assisting or observing assessment
 - Verification that the applicant operates safely as an instructor within the NTP.

The candidate must also sign the sections of the application that agree to:

- Using and understanding the Safety Guidelines
- Complying with the constitution and bylaws of AC
- Maintaining a personal program of continuous improvement and education.

Assessment requirements

All assessment must be conducted in accordance with Australian Canoeing requirements and is to be holistic; the candidate for an AC award is to operate in the full capacity of the award (cover all elements of the award being assessed) and in context with the award being assessed and is to be:

Valid—Assessors must see original work which is relevant to the award and which addresses and demonstrates practical application of the knowledge and skills

Sufficient—It must demonstrate that the level of skill or knowledge can be reached in a real workplace across differing conditions and contexts. It must not simply be evidence of a one off performance

Reliable—If a skill or knowledge area is not directly assessed, the evidence used must match the level of evidence provided by a direct assessment

Current—Evidence of performing an award role (leader, guide or instructor) must relate to performance in the last 12 months. Log book evidence of experience and skill levels must relate to performance in the last three years

Authentic—The evidence must clearly refer to the work of the individual (not a group effort) and must be validated by signatures and third party contact details.

Types of evidence

Direct—Direct observation by the assessor of performance of an award role.

Indirect—Includes simulations, role plays or problem responses. This type of evidence is not allowed for on water skills.

Supplementary—Competence inferred by testimonials, academic statements and interviews.

Critical areas of assessment

In all assessments the following areas will be assessed and must meet the specified criteria.

Performance criteria

Skill awards—Understands and demonstrates the principles

Guide and Leader awards—Briefs and corrects, understands and demonstrates the principles

Instructor awards—Teaches in both theory and practical sessions, briefs and corrects, understands and demonstrates the principles

Assessors—Understands the background to the principles.

Assessment

Injury prevention

Critical area	Specific component	Paddler to understand and demonstrate
Sun Safe	Protection	Hats, sunglasses, sunscreen, shirt, lip protection
Posture	Straight back	The need to maintain a straight back with slight forward lean whilst paddling
	Supported feet	Feet to be firmly supported so as to provide support to the lower back
	Pelvis position	Upright seating position provides the healthiest lumbar spine configuration
Reach/ power	Paddler's box	The concept of the paddler's box is understood and all strokes are taken within its confines
	Use of larger muscle masses	The efficiency, endurance and strength of larger muscle groups
Body vulnerability	Shoulders	Construction and risk associated with actions where the elbow is above shoulder and behind body plane
	Elbows	Construction; elbows should be kept slightly bent for power and stability
Nutrition	Drink	Drink appropriate to duration and effort
	Food	Food appropriate to duration and effort

Leadership

Critical area	Specific component	Paddler to understand and demonstrate
Personal	Equipment	Equipment appropriate to the activity context
	Safety	Correct safety equipment stowage and carriage
Group	Briefs	Clear statement and understanding of aims and objectives of the activity
		Activity signals
		Actions in the event of capsize
Leadership (if applicable)	Group management	Clear briefs
		Management during launch and land
		Management in the event of capsize

Paddle strokes

Critical area	Specific component	Paddler to understand and demonstrate
Strokes	Body rotation	Power phase of stroke is driven by body rotation
	Hand placement on paddle	Hands should be in the surrender position
	Wrist movement	Sufficient wrist movement for correct blade angle
	Paddle depth	Blade buried throughout power phases
	Entry point	Correct entry point for each stroke
	Exit point	Correct exit point for each stroke

General assessment standards

All assessment must be separate to training. Competency observed during training must be assessed at a distinctly separate time to ensure that it is learning that is being observed and not simply the ability to copy and repeat.

Assessors are required to clearly inform candidates that they are under assessment and:

- The candidate's performance is being observed

- The candidate has the right to appeal the assessment findings

- The candidate's performance will be scored against specific criteria

- They may not meet certain criteria

In the event of group assessment:

- They will be required to demonstrate performance in front of their peers

- They may be asked in front of their peers to demonstrate performance a second time

- The assessor may need to cease an activity or demonstrate an activity differently to how it was demonstrated by the candidate due to safety or injury prevention concerns

The assessor can cease assessment due to safety or injury prevention concerns at any time.

Assessment is to be against specific objective criteria. If an Assessor is concerned about the performance of a candidate but due to logistics, environmental or other assessment constraints, cannot confirm a result against the criteria assessment may be suspended, however a negative result may not be recorded against that criteria.

In the event that a candidate is found not competent in any part of the assessment process, re-assessment should not be conducted within the next four weeks. The assessor may relax this requirement if they feel the context leads itself to earlier re-assessment.

Knowledge assessment standards

Knowledge can be assessed through a variety of formats including written exams, short questions, presentations, discussion and questioning, etc.

Critical areas include safety, injury prevention and group management. To be determined competent in these areas you must:

- Score at least 60% on all assessment criteria in critical components

- Not indicate by word or action any action that would place people in greater risk.

Technical skills assessment standards

Technical skills must be assessed in the context of the award (i.e. water grade, sea state, sea environment, etc.)

Technical skills must be directly assessed by a current AC Assessor.

Consistency in technical skills is paramount and assessors should confirm the ability to repeat critical skills such as rolling in a variety of contexts.

Logbook standards

Candidates should be recommended to make a log entry for every paddle they undertake. The log book should be divided so that each trip has its own entry, that is dated and as a minimum contains:

- Time / distance

- The type of boat

- The number of participants

- Entry and exit points

- A general weather and water description.

Summaries such as '5 paddles during December, various locations' are considered unverifiable and inadmissible in courts as evidence of currency and therefore are unacceptable when applying for or re-registering an award.

Assessment

Experience standards

Candidates are required to demonstrate a level of experience for all awards above Basic Skills. This experience should be clearly written in a verifiable logbook as detailed in this document. Unless otherwise required by the award:

- General experience must be in the previous three years

- Guiding, instructional or leadership experience must be in the previous 12 months

- Experience must cover the upper limits of the required operational or assessment conditions.

Minimum age for Instructor Awards

Participants must be over 18 years of age to obtain an Instructor award.

Participants aged between 15 and 18 who fulfil the requirements of an Instructor award may be assessed and obtain a Junior Instructor Award that automatically converts to a full award when they turn 18 years of age.

Junior Instructors must work under supervision from an adult Instructor.

Appeals and complaints

Appeals against assessment results

Candidates can appeal against the results of their assessment. Appeals should be made in the first place to the NTP providing assessment, however if a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached an appeal can be lodged with AC.

Appeals must include the following:

- The appeal fee

- Details of all parties (candidate, assessor, NTP)

- Details of date, time and place of assessment

- Conditions of assessment (river level, sea state, wind, etc.)

- Specific details of the equipment used by the candidate in assessment

- Specific details of the decision being appealed against. The details must include the performance criteria in question and the evidence that is under consideration.

Note: this is not a forum for general complaints against Instructors, Assessors or NTPs.

Complaints against Assessors

Concerns and complaints about the operation of an Assessor should be handled in the following way.

All concerns should first be taken to the NPT in question. When a complaint is brought before the AC Education and Safety Technical Committee, evidence that the parties directly involved have been notified will be required.

Complaints which are referred to the AC Education and Safety Technical Committee are to be addressed to the Chair and must include the following:

- The registration fee

- Details of all parties (complainant, Assessor, NTP)

- Details of date, time and place of incident

- Conditions at incident (river level, sea state, wind, etc.)

- Specific details of any equipment involved in incident

- Specific details of the incident.

Note: This is not a forum for general complaints against Instructors, Assessors or NTPs. Concerns and evidence must be specific.

Compliance with RTO standards

AC National Training Providers provide quality assessment

The following items form part of the auditing of AC NTPs:

- 1.1 NTPs collect feedback after assessment programs, using the information to maintain a culture of safety and continuous improvement
- 1.2, 1.3 NTPs use the ACAS assessment tools, The ACAS assessment tools meet training package requirements. NTPs are required to provide AC with regular feedback on the assessment tools
- 1.4 Assessment is conducted by current AC Assessors under the supervision of a current AC NTP
- 1.5 RPL is available, however to ensure consistency in national safety, technique and injury prevention standards, the technical skills must be assessed by a current AC assessor.
- 2.1 NTPs continuously improve client services through 1.1 and via continuous national education and networking programs.
- 2.2 Candidates for assessment have free access to assessment standards and summaries and detailed information about their rights and obligations
- 2.3 Both the ACAS and NTPs have open channels for review and development with assessors and candidates.
- 2.4 Within the framework of nationally consistent standards of technique, injury prevention and safety, individuals receive support and assessment to meet their needs
- 2.5 Candidates have access to their results
- 2.6 Complaints are dealt with directly by Assessors or through their associated NTPs. Where parties are dissatisfied with the results, complaints can be taken to the AC Education and Safety Technical Committee.
- 3.1 The ACAS is reviewed every three years and as a result of request for review of specific areas. NTPs are required to implement updates as well as continuously monitoring and using a system of continuous improvement on their management systems
- 3.2 NTPs ensure they deliver ACAS components as required by AC.
- 3.3 NTPs must keep copies of all assessment documents including assessment summaries, exams, assessors notes and log books for a minimum of seven years. Details of student enrolment and results must be kept for 30 years.

On-water skills requirements: Strokes for all Awards

Level a: Introductory Awards

For the following Awards:

Flatwater Skills

Canoe/Kayak Lifeguard

Candidates are expected to perform the following strokes:

- forward and reverse paddle
- forward and reverse sweeps
- draw strokes
- low support strokes
- stern rudder.

For each stroke the minimum performance requirements are:

- correct hand placement on paddle
- sufficient wrist movement to enable correct blade placement
- adequate paddle depth in water to achieve effective stroke
- correct paddle blade angle throughout stroke
- correct paddle entry and exit points with respect to craft and body position.

Note: When using double craft the ability to paddle and perform correct strokes in the front and back of the craft must be demonstrated.

Level b: Guide, Instructor, Skills

For the following Awards

Flatwater Guide

Flatwater Instructor

Coastal Skills

Coastal Guide

Sea Skills

Sea Leader

Whitewater Skills

Candidates are expected to perform the following strokes:

- forward and reverse paddle
- forward and reverse sweeps
- draw strokes
- bow draw strokes
- low support strokes
- stern rudder
- safe, effective support strokes, using both blade faces (sea and whitewater skills only).

For canoes the following strokes also apply:

- J strokes
- pry strokes.

For each stroke the minimum performance requirements are:

- correct hand placement on paddle
- sufficient wrist movement to enable correct blade placement
- adequate paddle depth in water to achieve effective stroke

On-water skills requirements: Strokes for all Awards

- correct paddle blade angle throughout stroke
- correct paddle entry and exit points with respect to craft and body position
- correct distance of paddle from body or craft for the particular stroke
- use of correct muscle groups and body and arm movements for efficient paddling
- use of trunk rotation
- correct lean or edge of the craft
- adequate strength of stroke to achieve desired effect
- smooth transfer between different strokes.

Note : When using double craft the ability to paddle and perform correct strokes in the front and back of the craft must be demonstrated. (Not applicable for sea kayaking.)

For the Sea Skills Award the paddler must also:

- roll a sea kayak in surf of 1 metre

For the Whitewater Skills Award the paddler must also:

- roll a vessel in Grade 2 water (undecked canoes excluded).

Levels c and d: Whitewater and Sea Guide and Instructor, Advanced Awards

For Guide Awards:

- the paddler must be able to demonstrate the ability to perform everything proficiently at Level b whilst in the Guiding context and guiding novices.

For Instructor Awards:

- the paddler must be able to demonstrate the ability to perform everything proficiently at Level b whilst in the Instructing context and instructing novices.

For Advanced Awards:

- the paddler must be able to perform all of the Level b strokes in advanced conditions.

Other aspects

Equipment knowledge

For each of the award levels below the candidate is to be taught and assessed to the following:

Skill Awards (Flatwater Skills, Whitewater Skills and Sea Skills)

- Correct clothing for all seasons for the craft and its context
- PFDs, selection and fit
- Paddles, appropriate for the context
- Spray decks and helmets (whitewater and sea), appropriate selection and use
- Craft appropriate within the range applicable for the context (i.e. an understanding of the variations within whitewater boats)
- Packaging equipment, food and drink for the training or assessment context.

Flatwater Instructor

- Correct clothing for all seasons for flatwater paddling (broad knowledge)
- PFDs, selection and fit
- Paddles, range applicable to flatwater paddling
- Spray decks, appropriate selection and use
- Detailed knowledge of flatwater craft, basic knowledge of whitewater and sea craft
- Packaging equipment, food and drink for overnight programs.

Sea and Whitewater Instructor (includes Sea Guide)

- Correct clothing for all seasons expeditions (broad knowledge)
- Suitable camping for kayak and canoe based expeditions
- PFDs, selection and fit
- Paddles, detailed broad knowledge
- Spray decks and helmets, appropriate selection and use
- Detailed knowledge of craft that suits their context, basic knowledge of craft for other contexts
- Packaging equipment, food and drink for overnight programs.

Advanced skills

- Detailed knowledge of all equipment required for advanced activities
- Knowledge of the history and development of their specialty.

Advanced Instructors

Ability to convey detailed knowledge of all equipment required for advanced activities

Note: 'Context' refers to flatwater, whitewater (Grade 2–3 or advanced) and sea (to Fresh conditions or advanced).

Planning and preparation

Minimum standards for each award.

Logistics

- The ability to tie a boat successfully to a trailer or roof racks should be taught and assessed at skills level
- Correct transport of equipment such as paddles and PFDs to minimise damage to equipment and transport vehicle should be taught and assessed at skills level.

Navigation

Flatwater Skills

- Able to read a map or chart to a level that they can clearly show launching and landing areas and routes.

Flatwater Guide and Instructor

- Able to use compass
- Can read a map or chart (as appropriate), with understanding of symbols
- Able to plan a route, including contingencies.

Sea and Whitewater skills and above

- Able to plan overnight programs and navigate in untracked and remote areas.

Advanced Awards

- Able to navigate over the horizon, and in reduced visibility or extreme conditions.

Be seen—be safe

Canoes and kayaks are very small vessels, very hard to see, especially at night and at dusk and dawn. Do all you can to make yourself visible to avoid conflict with other traffic.

Some recommendations:

- Wear bright outer clothing (especially PFDs and hats)
- Carry a light at night
- Keep out of channels where possible—hug shores
- Stay in a group—create a bigger target
- Paddling through moorings may give some protection, however it also hides you from people who may need to see you are there
- At dusk and dawn, keep in mind you are very hard to see against the sun.

Remember also the general rule: if it's bigger, faster, or more expensive than your craft, keep out of its way.

Flatwater Awards

Definition of Flatwater conditions

Flatwater areas are areas such as lakes, dams, slow moving rivers, etc. An area should **not** be classified as flatwater if any of the following apply:

- rapids of any grade
- surf (of any size) entry or exit
- if the area is in the entrance structure to an estuary or embayment
- an area affected by swell
- documented tidal rips (see chart)
- documented tidal current greater than 1 knot (see chart)
- any area where the tide (rise or fall) removes a landing area or makes it unsuitable
- distances greater than 400 metres from shore
- fetch greater than 1 nautical mile.

The transition from flatwater to sea will often occur in the area of the following features:

- major river bend
- barrier sand bar structure
- constriction in river.

Basic Skills

The Basic Skills Award is purely an introduction and participant award that can be delivered and assessed by a current AC Instructor or Level 1 Coach. Assessment is to be carried out on flat sheltered water.

A formal assessment is required to attain the award. The assessment can be conducted in single or double kayaks (may be sit-on-top) or canoes, or ocean skis, and is specific to the craft in which it was taken. The candidates' performance throughout the assessment must be satisfactory and confident. If using a double craft the candidates should be tested in both the bow and stern positions.

The candidate shall demonstrate competence in all of the following areas:

Present craft and equipment for inspection (hatches and other equipment set or stowed ready for launch, spare equipment waterproofed).

Swim 50 metres in canoeing clothes (shirt, shorts and sandals as a minimum, and with a personal flotation device (PFD)), and swim under the craft to surface on the other side

Show, to the Assessor's satisfaction, a full understanding of the basic safety requirements for paddlers and their craft, and appreciation of the use of PFDs.

Launch the craft, embark and paddle away from the launching point

Demonstrate:

- understanding of correct posture and basic injury prevention
- paddling forwards, backwards, and emergency stops
- turning the craft
- the use of the paddle as a means of support on the water
- coming alongside another craft, and also a clear approach to the launching point

Disembark, then re-embark, paddle to deep water, capsize and assist with a deepwater rescue or swim the craft ashore.

Flatwater Skills

Award definition

Holders of the Flatwater Skills Award have demonstrated that they can competently paddle a kayak and/or canoe during a trip, as part of a group of peers, on flat, sheltered, undemanding water. This Award, or equivalent skills and knowledge, is a pre-requisite to becoming an AC Flatwater Guide or Instructor.

Prerequisite

None

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to control a craft in moderate conditions on flat, sheltered water.

Launch and land efficiently

Paddle the craft efficiently in moderate winds:

- forwards, backwards, sideways and turning

- using correct forward, reverse, draw and sweep strokes

Show efficient use of low supports

Capsize and swim craft ashore

Competently participate in simple rescues as rescuee and rescuer

Competently accept a tow.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate the ability to plan and navigate a 3 hour flatwater paddle:

Store, operate and maintain appropriate safety equipment

Select appropriate equipment and clothing with consideration of sun sense and hypothermia

Navigate a 3 hour flatwater paddle

Interpret weather for a flatwater environment.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing at least:

- Six trips of a minimum of three hours duration.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to maintain effective communication with a group.

Leadership component

None

Flatwater Awards

Lifeguard

Award definition

Holders of the Canoe/Kayak Lifeguard award are qualified to lead a paddling activity in canoes or kayaks (closed or sit-on-top) in enclosed situations, performing rescues as required, where the group under supervision can be seen from a single vantage point at any time and does not leave the immediate launch area.

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to supervise a group for an activity in enclosed flat sheltered water:

Personal skills:

Model flatwater skill set efficiently and safely

Plan and conduct an enclosed area paddling session

- arrange equipment
- demonstrate flatwater skills
- conduct rescues.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate the knowledge to run an enclosed area paddling program:

Plan and conduct an enclosed area paddling session:

- conduct hazard ID and risk management for the activity
- determine correct placement of supervisory staff
- arrange equipment with consideration of sun sense and hypothermia
- brief participants (including signals, posture, flatwater strokes, capsize).

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous two years at least:

On-water paddling activities totalling 6–9 hours as an observer under training or as an assistant Guide.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to run a limited flatwater activity:

Brief participants on an enclosed paddling activity (including signals, posture, flatwater strokes, capsize)

Demonstrate flatwater skills

Instruct participants on actions in the event of capsize or other emergency.

Leadership component

Provide leadership to groups of novices on enclosed, sheltered flatwater:

Supervise groups in an enclosed, sheltered flatwater paddling activity

Conduct rescues in an enclosed, sheltered flatwater paddling activity.

Flatwater Guide

Award definition

Holders of the Flatwater Guide Award are qualified to lead trips in canoes or kayaks (closed or sit-on-top) on inland waters such as open lakes and rivers (but not on whitewater or sea) in controlled conditions for inland kayaking and canoeing. Multi-day and overnight activities require the Overnight Camping Endorsement.

Prerequisite

Flatwater Skills, or equivalent skills and knowledge.

Skill component

Guide groups in flatwater paddling:

Personal skills:

- model flatwater skill set efficiently and safely

Conduct flatwater kayak or canoe activities including trips in winds to 16 knots, in flat sheltered waters:

- arrange group food and equipment
- manage the launching and landing of a group of novice paddlers
- manage a group of novice paddlers on a trip
- manage multiple rescues in moderate conditions
- manage tows in moderate conditions.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate the knowledge to plan and conduct a flatwater trip:

Australian Canoeing

- AC's role, membership structure, your rights and responsibilities
- Safety Guidelines, Minimal Impact Guidelines, Risk Management Policy, Incident reporting requirements

Hazard identification and risk management program for a flatwater trip (including expeditions)

Plan flatwater activities including one-day self contained expeditions

Appropriate communications systems and devices

Interpret weather for a flatwater trip

Licensing, permits and other legal and behavioral laws and requirements

Knowledge and maintenance of craft

Maintaining log books

Minimal environmental impact.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous two years at least:

Three guided flatwater activities of at least three hours duration as an observer under training or as an assistant Guide.

Flatwater Awards

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Brief a group of novices on:

- purpose and duration of trip
- expected conditions
- correct posture
- setting up the craft
- strokes as required
- group movement requirements
- launching and landing
- actions in the event of an emergency

Manage a flatwater trip:

- establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group on flatwater
- deliver directions in a clear and concise manner
- debrief.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to manage a group of novices in activities and one-day expeditions:

Coordinate group packing

Manage launch and landings

Monitor and manage group welfare

Manage route and group movement based on prevailing conditions

Manage multiple capsizes and emergencies.

Flatwater Instructor

Award definition

Holders of the Flatwater Instructor Award are qualified to instruct, facilitate skill transfer to develop participants in order so that they may act independently or with minimal supervision in controlled conditions for inland kayaking and canoeing. Multi-day and overnight activities require the Overnight Camping Endorsement.

Prerequisite

Flatwater Skills, or equivalent skills and knowledge

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to train individuals and groups from novices to Flatwater Skills trainees on activity and expedition based programs in canoes or kayaks:

Personal skills:

- model flatwater skill set efficiently and safely

Conduct flatwater kayak or canoe activities including trips in winds to 16 knots, in flat sheltered waters:

- arrange group food and equipment
- manage the launching and landing of a group of novice paddlers
- manage a group of novice paddlers on a trip
- manage multiple rescues in moderate conditions
- manage tows in moderate conditions

Plan and conduct a flatwater course:

- arrange venues
- arrange equipment
- arrange staff or assistants if required
- coordinate timetables
- coordinate logistics

Instruct:

- strokes
- launch and land
- appropriate rescues
- navigation
- preparing for an expedition

Knowledge component

Demonstrate the knowledge to plan and conduct a flatwater instructional program:

Australian Canoeing

- AC's role, membership structure, your rights and responsibilities
- Safety Guidelines, Minimal Impact Guidelines, Risk Management Policy, Incident reporting requirements

Hazard identification and risk management program for a flatwater trip (incl expeditions)

Plan flatwater activities including one-day self contained expeditions

Interpret weather for a flatwater trip

Licensing, permits and other legal and behavioral laws and requirements

Operate communications systems and equipment

Minimal environmental impact

Maintaining log books

Flatwater Awards

Theory of paddling:

- posture and injury prevention
- efficiency of stroke

Instructional technique:

- delivering theory training sessions
- delivering practical training sessions
- correcting and training skills
- training and correctional models.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous two years at least:

As an observer under training or as an assistant Instructor:

- three guided flatwater activities of at least three hours duration
- three paddling instructional activities of at least three hours duration
- two off-water sessions.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Brief a group of novices on:

- purpose and duration of trip
- expected conditions
- correct posture
- setting up the craft
- strokes as required
- group movement requirements
- launching and landing
- actions in the event of an emergency

Manage a flatwater trip:

- establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group on flatwater
- deliver directions in a clear and concise manner
- debrief

Deliver instruction:

- introduce a program including expectations, aims and outcomes, timing and movements
- deliver theory training sessions
- deliver practical training sessions
- communicate correct technique on the water.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to manage a group of novices in activities and on one-day expeditions:

Coordinate group packing

Manage launch and landings

Monitor and manage group welfare

Manage route and group movement based on prevailing conditions

Manage multiple capsizes and emergencies.

Demonstrate the ability to manage a training course:

Lead a training course:

– manage staff and assistants in training courses

– demonstrate on-water leadership in training courses.

Flatwater Awards

Flatwater Guide and Instructor: Moving water endorsement

This award is designed for Flatwater Guides or Instructors leading groups of paddlers on Grade 1 water that is clearly moving and has hazards such as strainers and a degree of risk, but less than that of a Grade 2 river.

Prerequisites

Flatwater Guide or Instructor
Four trips on moving water

Skill component

Guide groups in Grade 1 moving water, with the following in addition to the Flatwater Guide or Instructor Skill component:

Personal skills

- model flatwater skill set efficiently and safely in both the bow and stern positions of the boat

Conduct moving water kayak or canoe activities, including trips on Grade 1 water:

- successfully and consistently demonstrate forward and reverse ferry gliding
- successfully and consistently demonstrate breaking in and out
- manage rafting-up
- demonstrate swimmer tows and craft tows
- demonstrate single craft rescues
- manage group in-water rescues
- manage the launch and land a group into flowing water
- manage groups around other craft and other water users such as skiers
- extract and recover a pinned craft from obstacles.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate the knowledge to plan and conduct a moving water trip, with the following in addition to the Flatwater Guide or Instructor Knowledge component:

International River Grading

Hazard identification and risk management program for a moving water trip (including expeditions): snags, strainers, mud, overhanging trees and other hazards associated with the area, such as river height for forecast weather predictions.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous two years at least:

Four guided moving water activities of several hours duration as an observer under training or as an assistant Guide.

Communication component

Demonstrate the Flatwater Guide or Instructor Communication component on moving water.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the Flatwater Guide or Instructor Leadership component on moving water.

Guide and Instructor: Overnight camping endorsement

This endorsement is designed for Flatwater, Whitewater, Coastal and Sea Guides and Instructors who wish to run multi-day and overnight activities.

Prerequisites

- Guide or Instructor Award
- Three multi-day or overnight trips

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to train individuals and groups from novices to appropriate Skills-level trainees on activity and expedition based programs:

- Run an overnight campsite
- Instruct preparing for an expedition

Knowledge component

Demonstrate the knowledge to plan and conduct an instructional program:

- Plan activities including multi-day self contained expeditions
- Use and maintain an overnight campsite

Experience component

Produce a verified log showing over the previous two years at least:

- As an observer under training or as an assistant Guide or Instructor:
 - one overnight program
 - one overnight instructional program.

Communication component

Demonstrate the appropriate Guide or Instructor Communication component.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to manage a group of novices in activities and on multi-day expeditions:

- Coordinate group packing
- Manage launch and landings
- Monitor and manage group welfare
- Manage route and group movement based on prevailing conditions
- Manage multiple capsizes and emergencies
- Coordinate overnight campsite activities.

Whitewater Awards

Whitewater Skills Award

Award definition

Holders of the Whitewater Skills Award have demonstrated the ability to consistently perform whitewater skills to manoeuvre their kayak or canoe with precision in Grade 2 whitewater, and a level of knowledge that enables them to independently and safely undertake paddling activities on Grade 2 water.

Co-requisite

Whitewater Rescue Level 1

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to consistently perform the following in Grade 2 whitewater in a kayak, canoe or open canoe. If using an open canoe, the skills must be demonstrated in both the bow and stern position by the paddler:

Enter and exit their kayak or canoe from an eddy

Use efficient basic strokes to control the kayak or canoe

Use efficient power strokes:

- forward strokes
- reverse strokes

Use efficient directional strokes:

- forward sweeps
- reverse sweeps
- bow draw
- draw strokes
- stern rudder

Use efficient support strokes:

- low support (to gunwales in open canoe)

Ferry glide

- forwards
- reverse

Mixed strokes—bow draw to forward stroke combination

Break into eddies out of the current

Break out of eddies into the current

Use the most appropriate combinations of strokes when negotiating a rapid or performing a manoeuvre

Edge the craft to maintain stability

Use edging and body position to control kayak or canoe

Use water features for advantage to assist in turning and crossing currents

Read water to determine a safe route through a rapid

Follow a pre-determined route through a rapid

Identify and evaluate options, then implement appropriate actions, in unplanned situations

Use avoidance techniques for any river hazards

Roll, e.g. C to C or sweep technique (not required for open canoes).

Knowledge component

Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the following:

Australian Canoeing:

- AC Structure, Award scheme
- AC Safety Guidelines, Minimal Impact Guidelines

Other forms of recreational and competitive whitewater paddling, including sources of information to further develop whitewater paddling skills

Local, site specific environmental guidelines for venue use, including any areas used for overnight camping

The range of whitewater paddling equipment available and the specific design features that makes each item suitable for different purposes. This equipment should include kayaks and canoes, PFDs, helmets, spraydecks and paddles

Adjustments to assist in ensuring good fit, comfort and safety in the kayak or canoe

How to check that equipment meets required safety standards, including checking for signs of wear and tear

Self-management of suitable personal clothing choices for whitewater paddling

Secure methods of tying down a craft on roof racks or a trailer

Emergency paddle, repair, food, drink and clothing requirements for a day trip

Grade 2 river trip information within a state—sources and use of

Water flow levels within a state—sources of, and range of safe limits

Interpretation of weather forecasts for paddling venues

Interpretation of local, current weather and water conditions at a paddling venue

Common river features and hazards

International River Grading System

Navigational techniques to determine and locate entry and exit points to and from a river, including planned emergency routes

Pack for an overnight paddling trip.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log book showing at least:

A minimum of five Grade 2 whitewater trips of more than two hours duration at three different locations. Up to three whitewater instructional sessions on Grade 2 water, of two hours or more, at a fixed location, may be substituted for up to three river trips

Three whitewater instructional sessions on Grade 2 water, of two hours or more, at a fixed location, may be substituted for up to three river trips.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Use and interpret International River Signals in routine situations

Produce a float plan to leave behind, in case of emergencies

Monitor their position within a group on a river trip to ensure that they remain in close enough proximity for clear communication with other group members

Communicate in a positive manner within a paddling group to help establish and maintain an enjoyable, safe experience for all group members

Act on constructive feedback.

Advanced Whitewater Skills Award

Award definition

Holders of the Advanced Whitewater Skills Award have demonstrated the ability to consistently paddle with precision in Grade 3–4 whitewater and possess a level of knowledge that enables them to independently and safely undertake paddling activities on Grade 3–4 whitewater.

Prerequisite

Whitewater Skills Award, or equivalent skills and knowledge.

Co-requisite

Whitewater Rescue 2

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to consistently perform the following in Grade 3–4 whitewater:

- Enter the water from the bank by seal launch or from a small eddy
- Exit the kayak or canoe from a small eddy
- Read water to determine a safe route through a rapid
- Follow a pre-determined route through a rapid
- Control the negotiation of a rapid by using eddies to stop, check others and look ahead
- Use a combination of moves to negotiate a rapid
- Use a range of river features to assist in achieving a desired trajectory and to cross the current
- Use edging and body movement to control craft
- Use accurate stroke placement to control trajectory
- Adjust forward stroke rate, length and power as required for advantage
- Boof drops
- Surf waves
- Respond appropriately to unplanned situations
- Manage the negotiation of any river hazards through the use of techniques or avoidance
- Use safe, effective support strokes, using both blade faces
- Roll, on both sides.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the following:

Australian Canoeing:

- AC Structure and Award Scheme
- AC Safety Guidelines, AC Minimal Impact Guidelines

The range of advanced whitewater paddling clothing and equipment available and the specific design features that makes each item suitable for different purposes. This equipment should include kayaks and canoes, PFDs, helmets, spraydecks, paddles, dry tops and pants, other suitable paddling clothing and rescue equipment

How to safely use specific design features on equipment

Sources of Grade 3+ river trip information

Ranges of safe water flow levels for frequently used rivers, and the knowledge of how to access this information

Interpretation of weather forecast for Grade 3+ paddling venues

Common river features and hazards of Grade 3+ rivers

When to scout a rapid from land

Hazard identification and risk management for a whitewater trip

National and international recreational paddling Web sites and forums.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log and certification showing at least:

- A minimum of five Grade 3–4 river trips of more than two hours duration at three different locations
- Two whitewater instructional sessions, of two hours or more, at a fixed Grade 3–4 location, may be substituted for up to two river trips
- AC River Rescue Level 2 qualification.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Use and interpret International River Signals appropriate to skill set in non-routine situations
- Participate in group decision-making during an advanced river trip as both a contributor and active listener
- Recognise and consider the needs of others within the paddling group, particularly in changing circumstances, including modifying individual aims if necessary
- Monitor own position within a group on a Grade 3–4 river trip to ensure close enough proximity for communication to be possible with other group members
- Act on constructive feedback.

Whitewater Guide Award

Award definition

Holders of the Whitewater Guide Award are qualified to lead Grade 2 whitewater trips.

Prerequisite

Whitewater Skills Award, or equivalent skills and knowledge

Corequisite

Whitewater Rescue Level 2

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to guide a group of paddlers, including novices, on Grade 2 water:

Guide groups:

- select a suitable venue for participants and activity objectives
- arrange food, equipment and group safety equipment
- manage the safe entry and exit of paddlers from the water
- manage group movement on the water to maintain an acceptable level of safety
- provide appropriate rescue
- monitor and maintain group welfare.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate knowledge of:

Australian Canoeing

- AC's role, membership structure, your rights and responsibilities
- Safety Guidelines, Minimal impact Guidelines, Risk Management Policy, Incident reporting requirements

Suitable venue selection for participants and activity objectives

Relationships with other water users

Awareness and consideration of water management and land access issues at given sites

Risk management as applicable for the context of the activities, environment, venues and participants

Whitewater paddling equipment: range, applications and design features

A wide range of sources of information for weather, river heights and river trips

River features and hazards of Grade 2 rivers

How to grade rivers according to the International River Grading System

Signs, prevention and treatment for hypothermia, sunburn, dehydration and shock

Selecting and maintaining a suitable temporary or overnight site

Operation of communications systems.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing at least:

Three guided whitewater trips as an observer under training or as an assistant Guide

A minimum of five river trips on Grade 2 water, using at least two different venues.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Deliver briefings that fully inform participants of the trip purpose and content, hazards and safety instructions

Establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group on whitewater

Deliver directions in a clear and concise manner

Provide clear directions for negotiating a rapid using appropriate terminology.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to lead a group of paddlers on a Grade 2 river trip, showing the following leadership skills:

Conduct hazard identification and risk management for the session

Plan logistics including venue use and transport

Check participant equipment and clothing to ensure suitability and safety

Monitor participant well-being throughout the session

Adapt sessions as necessary in changing circumstances

Carry, and use as required, group safety, first aid and emergency equipment including: towline, throwbag, knife, Prusik loops, karabiner, knife and split paddle

Set up safety on a rapid as appropriate

Manage group movement on the water to maintain an acceptable level of safety

Manage any rescue situations.

Whitewater Instructor Award

Award definition

Holders of the Whitewater Instructor Award are qualified to instruct and facilitate the development of whitewater paddling skills and knowledge on Grade 2 water and guide groups on Grade 3.

This award is valid for three years from the date of issue of the award and can be renewed through the AC re-registration process.

Prerequisite

Whitewater Skills Award, or equivalent skills and knowledge

A minimum of 15 days of paddling on Grade 2 whitewater

A minimum of five river trips on Grade 3 water, using at least three different venues

Corequisites

Whitewater Rescue 2

Skill component

Demonstrate their ability to model the following on Grade 2 water:

Entering and exiting their kayak or canoe from an eddy

Use efficient basic strokes to control their kayak or canoe

Use efficient power strokes

- forward strokes

- reverse strokes

Use efficient directional strokes:

- forward and reverse sweep strokes

- bow draw

- draw strokes

- stern rudder

Use safe, effective support strokes, using both blade faces

Ferry glide:

- forwards

- reverse

Mixed strokes: bow draw to forward stroke combination

Break into eddies out of the current

Break out of eddies into the current

Use combinations of strokes when negotiating a rapid

Edge the craft to maintain stability

Use edging and body position to control the kayak or canoe

Use water features for advantage to assist in turning and crossing currents

Read water to determine a safe route through a rapid

Follow a pre-determined route through a rapid

Techniques for negotiating common river hazards

Roll, using a range of techniques

Rescue techniques for Whitewater Rescue Level 2.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the following:

Australian Canoeing:

- AC Structure and Award Scheme
- AC Safety Guidelines, AC Minimal Impact Guidelines

State canoeing organisations and clubs

Relationships with other water users

Awareness and consideration of water management and land access issues at given sites

Risk management as applicable for the context of the activities, environment, venues and participants

Development of kayaking and canoeing as a recreation or sport through history

Whitewater paddling and equipment: range, applications and design features

Recent developments in whitewater paddling and equipment

Stroke kinetics

A wide range of sources of information for weather, river heights and river trips

River features and hazards of Grade 2 rivers

How to grade rivers according to the International River Grading System

Basic injury prevention in whitewater paddling

Signs, prevention and treatment for hypothermia, sunburn, dehydration and shock

Selecting and maintaining a suitable temporary or overnight site

Teaching techniques to develop skills

Methods for identifying and correcting common errors

Delivering theory training sessions

Training trainers.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing the following over at least a two year period:

Fifteen days of paddling on Grade 2 whitewater

Five river trips on Grade 3 water, using at least two different venues

Working in an instructional capacity on at least three occasions.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Establish a relationship with the participants that assists them to feel safe, included and comfortable

Establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group on whitewater

Deliver instructions in a clear and concise manner

Provide explanations that are in a logical sequence, using techniques such as imagery to emphasise the main points

Explain, in overall terms, whitewater skills and techniques

Explain the components of skills and techniques

Provide clear instructions of how to negotiate a rapid using appropriate terminology

Encourage questioning by the participants

Provide constructive feedback in a positive manner

Impart knowledge about paddling according to requirements of Whitewater Skill Award and Whitewater Instructor Award.

Whitewater Awards

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to lead a group of paddlers on a Grade 2 whitewater session, showing the following leadership skills:

Plan and conduct a whitewater course

Arrange and coordinate staff or assistants

Plan and coordinate logistics, including for venue use and transport

Conduct hazard identification and risk management for the sessions

Plan, deliver and review a series of sequential learning experiences for a group of participants to facilitate skill development

Plan, deliver and review single instructional sessions that achieve the set objectives for that session

Conduct sessions that are stimulating, enjoyable and appropriate for the age and experience of the participants

Check participant equipment and clothing to ensure suitability and safety

Deliver briefings that fully inform participants of the session objectives and content, hazards and safety instructions

Monitor participant well-being throughout the session

Adapt sessions as necessary in changing circumstances

Carry, and use as required, group safety, first aid and emergency equipment including:
towline, throwbag, knife, Prusik loops, karabiner, and split paddle

Set up safety on a rapid as appropriate

Manage group movement on the water to maintain an acceptable level of safety

Manage any rescue situation

Coordinate initial response to emergency situations until other authorities take control.

Advanced Whitewater Instructor Award

Award definition

Holders of the Advanced Whitewater Instructor Award are qualified to lead Grade 3 and above whitewater trips and instruct and facilitate the development of advanced whitewater paddling skills and knowledge to the level where the participants could obtain an Advanced Whitewater Skill Award.

Prerequisite

Participants must be over 18 years to obtain this award

Participants aged between 15 and 18 who fulfill the requirements of this award may be assessed and obtain a Junior Advanced Whitewater Instructor Award that automatically converts to a full award when they turn 18 years of age. Junior Whitewater Instructors must work under supervision from an adult Advanced Whitewater Instructor

Whitewater Instructor Award

Advanced Whitewater Skills Award

A minimum of 15 days of paddling on Grade 3 whitewater

A minimum of five river trips on Grade 4+ water, using at least three different venues.

Corequisites

Whitewater Rescue 3

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to model the following on Grade 3 water:

Enter the water from the bank by seal launch or from a small eddy

Exit the kayak or canoe from a small eddy

Read water to determine a safe route through a rapid

Follow a pre-determined route through a rapid

Control the negotiation of a rapid by using eddies to stop, check others and look ahead

Use a combination of moves to negotiate a rapid

Use a range of river features to assist in achieving a desired trajectory

Use edging and body movement to control craft

Use accurate stroke placement to control trajectory

Adjust forward stroke rate, length and power as required for advantage

Boof drops

Surf waves

Negotiate of river hazards

Use safe, effective support strokes, using both blade faces

Roll, using a variety of techniques

Whitewater Rescue Level 2 techniques.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the following:

Australian Canoeing:

- AC Structure and Award Scheme

- AC Safety Guidelines, AC Minimal Impact Guidelines

Risk management as applicable for the context of the activities, environment, venues and participants

River features and hazards of Grade 3+ rivers

Communication devices for use in remote areas—satellite phones, EPIRBs, mobile phones

Teaching techniques to develop advanced whitewater skills

Teaching techniques to teach Whitewater Instructor courses

Teaching techniques to teach River Rescue Level 2 courses

Methods for identifying and correcting common errors in advanced whitewater skills.

Whitewater Awards

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log book showing at least:

A minimum of 15 days of paddling on Grade 3 whitewater

A minimum of five river trips on Grade 4+ water, using at least three different venues

Working in an instructional capacity in Grade 3 water on at least three occasions, with evidence that is consistent with direct assessment.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group on Grade 3 whitewater

Explain, in overall terms, advanced whitewater paddling skills and techniques

Explain the components of advanced skills and techniques

Explain, in overall terms, Whitewater Rescue Level 2 skills and techniques

Explain the components of Whitewater Rescue Level 2 skills and techniques

Provide clear instructions of how to negotiate a Grade 3 rapid using appropriate terminology

Impart knowledge about paddling according to requirements of Advanced Whitewater Skill Award

Teach Whitewater Instructor skills and knowledge.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to perform the following within the context of Grade 3 whitewater:

Plan, deliver and review a series of sequential learning experiences for a group of participants to facilitate skill development

Plan, deliver and review single instructional sessions that achieve the set objectives for that session

Conduct sessions that are stimulating, enjoyable and appropriate for the age and experience of the participants

Coordinate group movement on the water to maintain an acceptable level of safety

Modify planned activities as necessary to meet changing circumstances

Coordinate responses to emergency situations until other authorities take control.

Whitewater Rescue Awards

Whitewater Rescue Level 1

Award definition

Holders of the Whitewater Rescue Level 1 Award have demonstrated the ability to perform the following in moving water up to Grade 2 standard:

- Self-rescue
- Be an effective participant in their own rescue
- Rescue a single swimmer.

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to perform the following in moving water up to Grade 2:

- Self rescue by swimming to shore with kayak or canoe and paddle, from a capsize situation
- Use defensive swimming in a current to remain in a safe position within the current
- Use aggressive swimming in a current to reach shore or enter an eddy
- Retrieve a kayak or canoe and paddle from a current.
- Perform the following rescues as both the rescuer and swimmer:
 - towing rescue with the swimmer as an active participant, holding the end handhold of the rescuer's kayak or canoe and controlling their own capsized craft
 - deck carry across a current
 - X rescue
 - throwbag, using effective throw and pendulum swing into shore.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the following:

- Personal safety gear that can assist in rescue situations
- Throwbags—construction, care and packing, situations for use, how to use, throwing techniques
- Risk management:
 - hazard identification
 - self-managment to minimise risk.

Experience component

The paddler must have experience in managing basic rescues, demonstrating the following:

- Assessment of the situation
- Minimising risk, including to self and other group members
- Selection of a suitable rescue method
- Carrying out an effective rescue of a single swimmer using an effective method.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

- Communicate with the swimmer during the rescue, to assist the effectiveness of the rescue
- Communicate with the swimmer to reassure and to assess well-being
- Work with other group members to ensure a safe rescue is completed
- Use and interpret river signals.

Suggested rescue equipment

- Personal safety gear
- Throw bag
- Rescue knife
- Whistle.

Whitewater Rescue Level 2

Award definition

Holders of the Whitewater Rescue Level 2 Award have demonstrated the ability to manage a rescue situations from kayaks or canoes and gear retrieval in whitewater up to Grade 3 standard.

Prerequisite

Whitewater Rescue Level 1 or equivalent skills and knowledge.

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to perform the following in Grade 2–3 white water:

Use a combination of swimming techniques to negotiate changing currents and hazards including:

- swimming techniques to negotiate logs or strainers
- using a mix of defensive and aggressive swimming to self-rescue or avoid hazards in a rapid

Use the following techniques effectively to rescue swimmers:

- reaching
- throwbag use for multiple swimmers, including rope coil throws
- snag lines
- shallow water crossing (wading)

Use the following techniques to perform gear retrieval:

- towing using a towline
- vector pulls
- Z-drag 3:1.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the following:

Group safety gear that can assist in rescues

Manufacturer specifications of rescue equipment

Range and limitation of communication systems—EPIRBs, satellite phones, mobiles

Roles and group management in rescue

Range and limitations of different rescue and retrieval methods

Risk management in rescue situations

Guidelines for safe rope usage

Knots applicable for whitewater rescue situations

Throwbag use in situations with multiple swimmers

Hydrology of hazards

Management of most frequent river injuries

Patient care

Evacuation procedures.

Experience component

The paddler must have experience in managing rescues with multiple swimmers in Grade 2-3 white water through scenarios, demonstrating the following:

Assessment of the situation

Assessment and management of risks, including to self and other group members

Determination of priorities

Management of other group members including role allocation

Selection of a suitable rescue method

Selection of a suitable gear retrieval method
Selection of suitable equipment for rescue and retrieval
Carrying out an effective rescue of multiple swimmers using a suitable method
Carrying out effective gear retrieval using a suitable method
Management of evacuation
Modifying plans as necessary.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Establish, and operate by, a chain of command

- communicate rescue priorities and plans prior to rescue
- communicate during the rescue to assist in continually assessing the situation
- use a range of communication methods with the swimmer/s, other rescuers and other group members, including whistle, verbal and non-verbal methods

Apply decision-making skills

Use appropriate communication systems for external communication.

Suggested rescue equipment

Personal safety gear, including PFD with cowtail

Throw bag

Rescue knife

Whistle

Wrap kit (pulleys, tapes, Prusik loops, karabiners)

Flip line.

Whitewater Rescue Level 3

Award definition

Holders of the Whitewater Rescue Level 3 Award have demonstrated the ability to coordinate a rescue that may involve complex situations, multiple swimmers and gear retrieval in whitewater up to Grade 3 standard and above.

Prerequisite skills for entry into a Whitewater Rescue Level 3 course

Whitewater Rescue Level 2 or equivalent skills and knowledge.

Skill component

Demonstrate their ability to perform the following in Grade 3+ whitewater:

Use a combination of defensive and aggressive swimming techniques to negotiate changing currents and hazards including:

- whitewater dive
- eddy roll when crossing a strong eddy line

Use the following specialised rescue and gear retrieval methods:

- tethered swimmer
- belayed swimmer
- V-lower

Use improvised systems

Plan for and set up coordinated safety at a rapid or for an event.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the following in whitewater rescue situations:

Manufacturer specifications and design limits of rescue and safety equipment

Range and limitations of different specialized rescue and retrieval methods

Hydrology of Grade 3+ whitewater

Hazard recognition in Grade 3+ whitewater

Appropriate role allocation and group coordination in a rescue situation.

Experience component

The paddler must have experience in coordinating rescues in Grade 3+ whitewater using scenarios, demonstrating the ability to perform the following:

Assess a range of complex and emergency rescue situations

Determine needs promptly and accurately

Establish an action plan

Determine and coordinate a suitable rescue method

Determine and coordinate a suitable gear retrieval method

Select suitable equipment for rescue and retrieval

Coordinate an effective rescue using a suitable method

Coordinate effective gear retrieval using a suitable method

Coordinate other group members

Coordinate evacuation, as necessary

Monitor, assess and modify plans as necessary.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Communicate the action plan to all involved people

Communicate during the rescue to assist in coordinating the rescue or retrieval

Liaise with other emergency services

Apply decision-making skills to complex and changing situations

Provide an accurate incident report, including recommendations for future action.

Suggested rescue equipment

Personal safety gear, including PFD with cowtail
Throw bag
Rescue knife
Whistle
Wrap kit (pulleys, tapes, Prusik loops, karabiners)
Flip line.

Sea Awards

Qualification versus Assessment

Assessment for the Sea Kayak Awards Sea Skills, Sea Leader, Sea Guide, Sea Instructor is to be conducted at sea (outside of estuaries, embayments or other sheltering reefs or islands).

The Sea Kayak Awards Sea Skills, Sea Leader, Sea Guide, and Sea Instructor are the minimum recommended standard for operating in sea conditions (as defined below).

Definition of sea conditions

Environmental conditions

Often the environmental conditions are confused with the geography constraints: for example being 1 nautical mile offshore will always be sea, however a bay may at some times have swell, etc. and very large open lakes may develop conditions in excess of the sea assessment conditions at certain times.

Regardless of other factors, it should always be noted that:

- wind gusts can be 40% greater than the forecast strengths
- wave heights can be double the forecast average
- swell and seas are cumulative
- underwater features such as sand bars can and do shift
- traffic is un-qualifiable and cumulative to other effects
- rain runoff can alter tides
- visibility can change dramatically during environmental events such as storms or fog
- fauna dangers such as blue bottles, seals, etc. can be considered in risk management, however they are unpredictable
- extreme weather can render any patch of water dangerous.

An area should be classified as sea conditions if any of the following apply:

- the area requires surf (of any size) entry or exit on an average day
- if the area is in the entrance structure to an estuary or embayment
- an area of swell
- documented tidal rips (see chart)
- documented tidal current greater than 1 knot (see chart)
- any area where the tide (rise or fall) removes a landing area or makes it unsuitable
- distances greater than 100 metres from shore
- fetch greater than 8 nautical miles.

The transition from sea to inland water will often occur in the area of the following features:

- major river bend
- barrier sand bar structure
- constriction in river.

Introduction to Sea Skills

Award definition

Holders of the Introduction to Sea Skills Award have demonstrated the ability to plan and conduct activities in sea kayaks with Sea Instructors, Sea Guides or Sea Leaders in coastal conditions defined as:

- Estuaries, embayments and areas enclosed or partially enclosed by fringing reef or islands
- Areas of exposed coastline that are simple, not involving overfalls, tidal races, difficult landings or open crossings
- Distances of up to two nautical miles offshore
- Light to Moderate conditions (11–16 knots) as defined by the Beaufort Scale and used by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Skill component

Demonstrate sea kayak skills at sea in light to moderate conditions:

Preparation of craft and equipment

Launch and land in surf to 0.5 metre

Paddle the craft efficiently in moderate (to 16 kn) conditions at sea:

- forwards, backwards, sideways and turning
- use correct forward, reverse, draw and sweep strokes
- use safe, effective support strokes, using both blade faces, in surf to 0.5 metre

Competently participate in rescues as rescuee and rescuer

Competently accept a tow

Form into and disperse from a raft

Secure craft for transport, secure equipment to craft.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate knowledge of:

The advantages and limitations of sea kayaks

Select appropriate equipment and clothing with consideration of sun sense and hypothermia

Plan and navigate a coastal sea kayaking activity

Store, operate and maintain appropriate safety and communication equipment

Interpret weather for a marine environment.

Experience component

Produce a verified log showing over the previous year at least:

A minimum of six coastal trips of a minimum of three hours duration.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Maintain effective communication with a group.

Coastal Skills—Sit-on-Top

Award definition

Holders of the Coastal Skills—Sit-on-Top Award have demonstrated the ability to plan and conduct personal kayaking activities in sit-on-top kayaks in coastal conditions defined as:

- Estuaries, embayments and areas enclosed or partially enclosed by fringing reef or islands
- Areas of exposed coastline that are simple, not involving overfalls, tidal races, difficult landings or open crossings may be included
- Distances of up to one nautical mile offshore
- Conditions below Fresh (17 knots) as defined by the Beaufort Scale and used by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Skill component

Demonstrate sit on top kayaking skills in coastal conditions:

Paddle efficiently in conditions below Fresh (winds to 17 knots):

- secure equipment to craft in preparation for paddling
- launch and land in surf to 0.5 metre
- paddle forwards, backwards, sideways and turning using correct forward, reverse, draw and sweep strokes
- show efficient use of supports in surf to 0.5 metre
- capsize and recover in surf to 0.5 metre

Secure craft for transport.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate knowledge of:

The advantages and limitations of sit-on-top craft

Select appropriate equipment and clothing with consideration of sun sense and hypothermia

Plan and navigate a coastal sit-on-top kayaking activity

Store, operate and maintain appropriate communication equipment

Weather interpretation for a coastal kayaking activity.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous year at least:

A minimum of twelve coastal trips of a minimum of three hours duration.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Maintain effective communication with a group.

Sea Skills

Award definition

Holders of the Sea Skills Award have demonstrated the ability to plan and conduct personal kayaking activities in sea kayaks at sea defined as outside of estuaries, embayments or other sheltering reefs or islands in moderate conditions:

- Conditions below Fresh (17 knots) as defined by the Beaufort Scale and used by the Bureau of Meteorology
- Assessed in minimum winds of 11 knots (moderate conditions)
- Areas of exposed coastline that is simple, not involving overfalls, tidal races, difficult landings or open crossings may be included
- Distances of up to 4 nautical miles from the nearest shore
- Breaking (overtopping) waves (sea) up to 1 m
- Surf to 1 m.

Skill component

Demonstrate sea kayak skills at sea in moderate to fresh conditions:

Preparation of craft and equipment

Launch and land in surf to 1 metre

Paddle the craft efficiently in moderate (to 16kn) conditions at sea:

- forwards, backwards, sideways and turning
- use correct forward, reverse, draw and sweep strokes
- use safe, effective support strokes, using both blade faces, in surf to 1m

Competently participate in rescues as rescuee and rescuer

Competently accept a tow

Capsize and roll in surf to 1 metre

Secure craft for transport, secure equipment to craft.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate the ability to plan and navigate an overnight sea trip:

Understand the advantages and limitations of sea kayaks

Plan and navigate an overnight sea kayak coastal passage

Store, operate and maintain appropriate communication equipment

Select appropriate equipment and clothing with consideration of sun sense and hypothermia

Interpret weather for a marine environment.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous two years at least:

Two different overnight coastal sea kayak trips

Six coastal trips of a minimum of three hours duration over a period of at least two years.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Maintain effective communication with a group.

Sea Awards

Sea Leader

Award definition

Holders of the Sea Leader Award are qualified to lead groups of Sea Skills paddlers in sea kayaks at sea:

- Conditions below Fresh (17 knots) as defined by the Beaufort Scale and used by the Bureau of meteorology
- Distances of up to 4 nautical miles from the nearest shore
- Surf to 1 m.

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to manage a group of Sea Skills paddlers on a sea trip of greater than three hours:

Manage the launch and landing in surf to 1 metre of a group of Sea Skills paddlers

Manage a group of Sea Skills paddlers in fresh conditions at sea

Manage multiple rescues in fresh conditions at sea

Manage tows in fresh conditions in fresh conditions at sea

Demonstrate re-enter and roll in fresh conditions at sea.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate knowledge of

Australian Canoeing

- AC's role, membership structure, your rights and responsibilities
- Safety Guidelines, Minimal impact Guidelines, Risk Management Policy, Incident reporting requirements

Hazard identification and risk management program for a sea trip (incl expeditions)

Interpret weather for a sea trip

Licensing, permits and other legal and behavioral laws and requirements

Operate communications systems and equipment.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous two years at least:

Three trips of at least three hours in a coastal environment as group assistant leader

One self contained overnight trip in a sea environment of at least 25 km distance.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Brief a group on:

- purpose and duration of trip
- expected conditions
- group movement requirements
- launching and landing
- actions in the event of an emergency

Manage a sea trip

- establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group at sea
- deliver directions in a clear and concise manner

Debrief.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to manage a group of Sea Skills paddlers on a trip:

Manage surf launch and landings

Manage route and group movement based on prevailing conditions

Manage multiple capsizes and emergencies.

Sea Guide

Award definition

Holders of the Sea Guide Award are qualified to lead groups of novices on activity and expedition based programs in sea kayaks at sea:

- Below “strong wind warnings” conditions (forecast or observed of greater than 25 knots)
- Crossings of less than 10 nautical miles
- Surf to 1 m.

Operations may also be conducted in conditions that exceed the above where a documented hazard identification and risk management process has been undertaken to ensure the participants’ skills and equipment are appropriate to the environment.

Multi-day and overnight activities require the Overnight Camping Endorsement.

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to guide a group of paddlers including novices on sea activities and expeditions:

Personal skills:

- model Sea Skills set efficiently and safely

Conduct sea activities including trips and multiday expeditions in winds to 16 knots, at sea:

- arrange group food and equipment
- manage the launching and landing of a group of novice paddlers in surf to 1 m
- manage a group of novice paddlers on a trip
- manage multiple rescues in fresh conditions
- manage tows in fresh conditions

Demonstrate re-enter and roll in fresh conditions at sea.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate knowledge of

Australian Canoeing

- AC’s role, membership structure, your rights and responsibilities
- Safety Guidelines, Minimal impact Guidelines, Risk Management Policy, Incident reporting requirements

Hazard identification and risk management program for a sea trip (incl expeditions)

Plan sea activities including one-day self contained expeditions

Understanding of selection of launching and landing sites

Interpret weather for an extended sea trip

Licensing, permits and other legal and behavioral laws and requirements

Operate communications systems and equipment

Knowledge and maintenance of craft

Maintaining log books

Minimal environmental impact.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous two years at least:

Three guided sea activities of at least three hours duration as an observer under training or as an assistant Guide.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Brief a group of novices on:

- purpose and duration of trip
- expected conditions
- correct posture
- setting up the craft
- launching and landing in surf
- strokes as required
- group movement requirements
- actions in the event of an emergency

Manage a sea trip:

- establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group on the sea
- deliver directions in a clear and concise manner
- debrief.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to manage a group of novices in activities and on multiday expeditions:

Coordinate group packing

Manage surf launch and landings

Monitor and manage group welfare

Manage route and group movement based on prevailing conditions

Manage multiple capsizes and emergencies.

Coastal Guide—Sit-on-Top

Award definition

Holders of the Coastal Guide—Sit-on-Top Award have demonstrated the ability to plan and conduct guided kayaking activities in sit-on-top kayaks in coastal conditions defined as:

- Estuaries, embayments and areas enclosed or partially enclosed by fringing reef or islands
- Areas of exposed coastline that are simple, not involving overfalls, tidal races, difficult landings or open crossings may be included
- Distances of up to 1 nautical mile offshore
- Conditions below Fresh (17 knots) as defined by the Beaufort Scale and used by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Multi-day and overnight activities require the Overnight Camping Endorsement.

Prerequisite

Coastal Skills, or equivalent skills and knowledge.

Skill component

Guide groups of paddlers in a 3–5 hour sit-on-top kayaking activities in coastal conditions:

Personal skills:

Model and explain the Coastal Skills skill set efficiently and safely:

- getting in and out of a sit-on-top kayak
- sound posture
- strokes
- basic boat control

Conduct sit on top activities including trips in winds to 16 knots, in coastal waters:

- arrange group food and equipment
- launching and landing in coastal environments (including surf 0.5–1m)
- manage a group of novice paddlers on a trip
- manage multiple rescues in moderate conditions
- manage tows in moderate conditions.

Knowledge component

Plan, conduct and review a 3–5 hour coastal sit-on-top activity including:

Australian Canoeing:

- AC's role, membership structure, your rights and responsibilities
- Safety Guidelines, Minimal impact Guidelines, Risk Management Policy, Incident reporting requirements

Hazard identification and risk management program for a coastal trip

Appropriate communication systems and devices

Weather interpretation for the activity

Navigation

Licensing, permits and other legal and behavioral laws and requirements

Maintaining log books

Knowledge and maintenance of craft

Minimal environmental impact.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous two years at least:

Three occasions as an assistant or observer in coastal guiding activities.

Communication component

Demonstrate the communication skills to guide a group activity:

Brief a group of novices on:

- purpose and duration of trip
- expected conditions
- correct posture
- setting up the craft
- strokes as required
- group movement requirements
- launching and landing
- actions in the event of an emergency

Manage a coastal trip

- establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group on a coastal trip
- deliver directions in a clear and concise manner
- debrief.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to lead a group of novice paddlers on a 3–5 hour guided tour:

Coordinate group packing

Manage launch and landings

Monitor and manage group welfare

Manage route and group movement based on prevailing conditions

Manage multiple capsizes and emergencies.

Sea Instructor

Award definition

Holders of the Sea Instructor Award have demonstrated the ability to train individuals and groups from novices to instructors on activity and expedition based programs in sea kayaks at sea defined as outside of estuaries, embayments or other sheltering reefs or islands in moderate conditions:

- Below “strong wind warnings” conditions (forecast or observed of greater than 25 knots)
- Assessed in minimum winds of 11–16 knots (18–23 kn conditions suggested)
- Areas of exposed coastline that is simple, not involving overfalls, tidal races, difficult landings or open crossings may be included
- Crossings of less than 10 nautical miles
- Breaking (overtopping) waves (sea) up to 1 m
- Surf to 1 m.

Operations may also be conducted in conditions that exceed the above where a documented hazard identification and risk management process has been undertaken to ensure the participants’ skills and equipment are appropriate to the environment.

Multi-day and overnight activities require the Overnight Camping Endorsement.

Prerequisite

Sea Skills, or equivalent skills and knowledge

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to train individuals and groups from novices to instructors on activity and expedition based programs in sea kayaks:

Personal skills:

- model Sea Skills skill set efficiently and safely
- demonstrate re-enter and roll in fresh conditions at sea

Conduct sea activities including trips and one-day expeditions in winds to 16 knots, at sea:

- arrange group food and equipment
- manage the launching and landing of a group of novice paddlers in surf to 1m
- manage a group of novice paddlers on a trip
- manage multiple rescues in fresh conditions
- manage tows in fresh conditions

Plan and conduct a sea course:

- arrange venues
- arrange equipment
- arrange staff or assistants
- coordinate timetables
- coordinate logistics

Instruct:

- rolling
- launching and landing in surf
- navigation
- preparing for an expedition
- deliver a theory training session
- deliver a practical training session.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate knowledge of:

Australian Canoeing:

- AC's role, membership structure, your rights and responsibilities
- Safety Guidelines, Minimal impact Guidelines, Risk Management Policy, Incident reporting requirements

Hazard identification and risk management program for a sea trip (incl expeditions)

Show and understand appropriate leadership styles

Plan sea activities including one-day self contained expeditions

Understanding of selection of launching and landing sites

Interpret weather for an extended sea trip

Licensing, permits and other legal and behavioral laws and requirements

Operate communications systems and equipment

Knowledge and maintenance of craft

Maintaining log books

Minimal environmental impact

Instruction:

- delivering theory training sessions
- delivering practical training sessions
- correcting and training skills
- training and correctional models

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous two years at least:

Three practical instructional activities at sea of at least three hours duration as an observer under training or as an assistant Instructor

Two theory sessions as an observer under training or as an assistant Instructor.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Brief a group of novices on:

- purpose and duration of trip
- expected conditions
- correct posture
- setting up the craft
- launching and landing in surf
- strokes as required
- group movement requirements
- launching and landing
- actions in the event of an emergency

Manage a sea trip:

- establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group on the sea
- deliver directions in a clear and concise manner
- debrief

Sea Awards

Instruction:

- introduce a program including expectations, aims and outcomes, timing and movements
- deliver theory training sessions
- deliver practical training sessions
- model correct technique at sea
- demonstrate an understanding recent developments in equipment and technique.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to manage a one-day training course:

Lead a group:

- use of appropriate leadership styles
- coordinate group packing
- manage surf launch and landings
- monitor and manage group welfare
- manage route and group movement based on prevailing conditions
- manage multiple capsizes and emergencies

Lead a course:

- lead participants in a training course
- demonstrate on water leadership in training courses.

Advanced Sea Skills

Award definition

Holders of the Advanced Sea Skills Award have demonstrated the ability to plan and conduct self-reliant advanced sea kayak activities. Advanced sea kayaking includes longer expeditions, more remote sea kayaking activities, more extreme conditions.

Note: Extreme conditions are winds greater than 27 knots, seas greater than 2 m.

Prerequisite

Sea Skills, or equivalent skills and knowledge

Skill component

Demonstrate sea kayak skills at sea in Strong Wind conditions:

Launch and landing skills:

- surf to 2 m
- currents >2 knots
- winds greater than 22 knots
- rock platforms

Paddling skills:

- stroke efficiency and integrity in winds to 27 knots in seas to 2 m
- roll, bracing and support skills in surf to 2 m
- self-rescue skills (re-enter and roll in surf and strong winds)

Navigation skills:

- low visibility navigation
- over the horizon navigation
- ability to conduct crossings and committing coastlines of greater than 4 nm.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate knowledge of:

The history of sea kayaking

Equipment design, construction and use

The environment:

- remote weather forecasting
- ocean characteristics

Planning:

- longer expeditions (>5 days)
- remote area activities
- extreme environmental conditions (hot, cold, committed runs)
- remote communication and rescue equipment
- *Australia Pilot*, Notices to Mariners.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing at least:

Three years of sea paddling

Three different five days self-contained expeditions

One seven day self-contained expedition.

Sea Awards

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Maintain effective communication with a group in extreme conditions

Monitor group welfare in extreme conditions

Be self sufficient in extreme conditions.

Advanced Sea Instructor

Award definition

Holders of the Advanced Sea Instructor Award have demonstrated the ability to train individuals and groups from novices to Advanced Sea Instructors. They have also demonstrated the ability to coordinate programs including:

- Direct instructional programs
- Manage staff for multi group, multi-day programs
- Manage logistics for multi group, multi-day programs.

Prerequisite

Advanced Sea Skills, or equivalent skills and knowledge

Sea Instructor, or equivalent skills and knowledge.

Skill component

Demonstrate the ability to train individuals and groups from novices to Advanced Sea Instructors:

Personal skills:

- model Advanced Sea skill set efficiently and safely

Conduct sea activities including advanced and remote expeditions:

- arrange group food and equipment
- manage the launching and landing of a group of paddlers in strong wind conditions
- manage a group of paddlers on an advanced trip
- manage multiple rescues in strong wind conditions
- manage tows in strong wind conditions
- run remote campsites

Plan and conduct an advanced sea course:

- arrange venues
- arrange equipment
- arrange staff or assistants
- coordinate timetables
- coordinate logistics

Deliver training on how to:

- launch and land in 2m surf
- navigate in low visibility or over the horizon conditions
- prepare for a remote expedition
- deliver a practical training session in advanced sea conditions.

Knowledge component

Demonstrate knowledge of:

Australian Canoeing:

- AC's role, membership structure, your rights and responsibilities
- Safety Guidelines, Minimal Impact Guidelines, Risk Management Policy, Incident reporting requirements

Hazard identification and risk management program for remote and extended expeditions

Plan remote and extended expeditions

Understanding of selection of launching and landing sites

Interpret weather for an extended sea trip

Sea Awards

Instruction:

- delivering advanced practical training sessions
- managing staff for multi-activity programs
- managing multi-group programs.

Experience component

Produce a verifiable log showing over the previous three years at least:

Three guided multi-day sea programs

One multi group sea program

Three complete Sea Instructor programs as a primary instructor or as program director.

Communication component

Demonstrate the ability to:

Brief a group on:

- expected conditions in a remote environment
- boat control in strong winds
- launching and landing in surf to 2m
- group movement requirements in extreme conditions
- actions in the event of an emergency

Manage a remote sea trip:

- establish and maintain an effective communication system within the group in extreme conditions
- deliver directions in a clear and concise manner in extreme conditions

Manage a multi group team.

Leadership component

Demonstrate the ability to lead:

Lead a group in remote or strong wind conditions:

- manage surf launch and landings
- monitor and manage group welfare
- manage route and group movement based on prevailing conditions
- manage multiple capsizes and emergencies
- coordinate overnight campsite activities

Lead a course:

- direct staff and assistants in training courses
- demonstrate on water leadership in training courses in strong wind conditions
- lead a group of trainers on a multi day training course.

Sea Rescue endorsement

Introduction

The Sea Rescue endorsement is a one day training program for proficient sea paddlers focusing on group rescue skills. Like the Surf Bronze it works to ensure leaders are kept current in rescue techniques and have shown recent proficiency.

Definition

The holder of this endorsement has been assessed in rescue proficiency in sea kayaks or sit-on-top craft at sea defined as outside of estuaries, embayments or other sheltering reefs or islands in moderate conditions.

Prerequisite

Sea Skills or Coastal Skills

Participants must be proficient at handling their own equipment at sea and have solid self rescue skills as well as being trained in basic planning and conducting of sea trips.

Application

This endorsement is for the training of guides and instructors who take novice groups into coastal, estuarine and ocean environments in sea kayaks or on suitable sit-on-top craft.

A guide is a person who leads another on an experience without the intention of imparting knowledge or skills. Instruction is education where the aim is to impart skills and knowledge to the participants.

The training covers the ability to:

- Plan for capsize and other rescue situations
- Manage individuals and groups during rescues
- Review rescue procedures.

Validity

The endorsement is valid for a period of 3 years.

It is recommended that leaders undertake refresher training every 12 months.

Reregistration is through the Australian Canoeing Award Scheme re-registration system.

Definition of sea conditions

Environmental conditions

Often the environmental conditions are confused with the geography constraints: for example being one nautical mile offshore will always be sea, however a bay may at some times have swell, etc. and very large open lakes may develop conditions in excess of the sea assessment conditions at certain times.

Regardless of other factors, it should always be noted that:

- wind gusts can be 40% greater than the forecast strengths
- wave heights can be double the forecast average
- swell and seas are cumulative
- underwater features such as sand bars can and do shift
- traffic is un-qualifiable and cumulative to other effects
- rain runoff can alter tides
- visibility can change dramatically during environmental events such as storms or fog
- fauna dangers such as blue bottles, seals, etc. can be considered in risk management, however they are unpredictable
- extreme weather can render any patch of water dangerous.

Sea Awards

An area should be classified as sea conditions if any of the following apply:

- the area requires surf (of any size) entry or exit on an average day
- if the area is in the entrance structure to an estuary or embayment
- an area of swell
- documented tidal rips (see chart)
- documented tidal current greater than 1 knot (see chart)
- any area where the tide (rise or fall) removes a landing area or makes it unsuitable
- distances greater than 100 metres from shore
- fetch greater than 8 nautical miles.

The transition from sea to inland water will often occur in the area of the following features:

- major river bend
- barrier sand bar structure
- constriction in river.

Topics covered

Risk management

Communication systems

Rescue techniques

Tows