

BCU 3 Star Sea Kayak Syllabus

Aim

Successful performance at this level indicates that a candidate can consider themselves as an able improving sea paddler rather than a beginner. During assessment the candidate would be able to demonstrate personal competence paddling in wind conditions of no more than Beaufort Force 3 or Sea State 3 as part of a led group.

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

Sea paddlers who use sit-on-top kayaks may be interested in the BCU 3 Star Sea Sit-on-Top Award.

Assessment Prerequisites

- Provide evidence of at least 3 different journeys on the sea, of about 3 hours duration (8nm) each
- A consistent BCU 2 Star standard of performance in the appropriate craft is required for anyone starting to work towards the BCU 3 Star Sea Kayak Award; it is recommended that the candidate holds the BCU 2 Star Award
- The ability to swim confidently in the sea environment, wearing normal paddling clothes

Craft

A sea kayak suitable for journeying on the sea and one that allows the candidate to safely and effectively complete the requirements of this syllabus. If in a kayak fitted with a rudder it must be disabled for the duration of the assessment. It is required that boats should be fitted with total buoyancy (e.g. watertight compartments or airbags). Candidates must complete all elements of an assessment in the same type of craft.

Equipment

Personal equipment required by an able improving sea paddler and appropriate to the conditions and the remit of the award.

Assessor

BCU 3 Star Sea Provider.

Assessment Venue

The assessment venue must give the opportunity for the following conditions, to include:

- Wind up to and including Beaufort Force 3 or Sea State 3
- Simple non-committing coastlines with landings at regular intervals
- Launching and landing through surf up to 1m trough to peak

The nature of assessment is that of continuous evaluation throughout a suitable day journey.

Related BCU Policies

- See 'BCU Reasonable Adjustments for Paddlesports Awards and Coaching' for details about how providers can make adjustments for paddlers with specific disabilities
- See 'BCU Appeals Procedure' for details of how candidates can go about making an appeal or complaint about the conduct of a BCU Star Award

Useful Information

Please refer to the BCU 3 Star Sea Training and Assessment Notes and the BCU Star Award Guidance Notes for further information.

Technical Syllabus

It is expected that candidates are able to perform all skills on both sides. The only exception is the roll where one side is deemed sufficient.

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

- A.1 Lifting, carrying, launching and landing
- A.2 Efficient forward paddling
- A.3 Efficient reverse paddling and stopping
- A.4 Maintaining direction
- A.5 Changing direction
- A.6 Moving sideways, both static and on the move
- A.7 Supporting, both static and on the move
- A.8 Rolling
- A.9 Securing

Part B – Rescue Skills

- B.1 Deep-water rescue
- B.2 Contact tows and use of towline
- B.3 Eskimo rescue

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

- C.1 Personal risk management
- C.2 Awareness of others
- C.3 Paddle as part of a led group

Part D – Theory

- D.1 Equipment
- D.2 Sea safety
- D.3 Weather
- D.4 Wellbeing, health and first aid
- D.5 Access
- D.6 Environment
- D.7 Planning, including:
 - Basic knowledge of tidal times, constants and effects of wind on simple tidal water e.g. wind against tide, offshore winds
 - Understanding of spring and neap tides
 - Basic understanding of the effect of topography on tidal flow and relevant hazards, e.g. boomers, shelving beaches, sand bars, etc.
- D.8 Group awareness
- D.9 General knowledge
- D.10 Navigation, including:
 - Basic recognition of main buoyage
 - Ability to identify position by using a grid reference and a latitude and longitude
 - Use a compass to paddle on a bearing
 - Ability to calculate distance and estimate paddling time
- D.11 Basic knowledge of collision regulations and sound signals