

4 Star Freestyle Kayak Leader Syllabus

Aim

Successful performance at this level indicates that a candidate has a solid foundation in freestyle and the skill level required to lead a group of 4 paddlers (not including themselves) in appropriate locations (park and play site, grade 3 river section of no more than 500 metres in length or managed site), up to moderate conditions. Paddlers at this level will be able to judge the conditions and the standard of the group and make appropriate decisions along with the need to modify plans as required.

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

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

Paddlers of closed cockpit freestyle canoes may also be interested in the British Canoeing 4 Star Freestyle Canoe Leader Award. Although there are other disciplines within the freestyle arena including squirt boats and open canoes the award concentrates on the float classes of kayak and closed cockpit canoe. It is intended that paddlers will then use the core skills gained in the Star Awards to specialise in other disciplines. All disciplines of freestyle are actively promoted.

Moderate Water Definition

Moderate White Water = Grade 2(3) white water or equivalent weirs.

(Extracted from Terms of Reference)

Training and Assessment Courses

To achieve British Canoeing 4 Star Freestyle Kayak Leader candidates are required to attend British Canoeing 4 Star Freestyle Kayak Leader Training. This involves at least 2 days of formal training in personal skills and leadership. Training is valid for 3 years; during this time, and upon completion of the assessment prerequisites, candidates can then put themselves forward for assessment. Assessments are run over 2 days, which do not need to be consecutive.

Related British Canoeing Policies

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

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

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

Useful Information

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

Training Prerequisites

To be able to get the most out of the training candidates should have the British Canoeing 3 Star Freestyle Kayak Award or be able to paddle to the standard of British Canoeing 3 Star Freestyle Kayak.

Assessment Prerequisites

- Home Nation 4 Star Freestyle Kayak Leadership Registration (LR)
- Valid (within 3 years) British Canoeing recognised 2 day first aid award (if first aid training was completed prior to 31/12/11 a recognised 8 hour first aid course is acceptable)
- Previous experience: candidates are encouraged to record their freestyle sessions in order to improve their reflective skills and to provide evidence of at least 10 freestyle sessions (at least 20 hours in total) in varied locations where possible. During some of these sessions they must have taken some responsibility for themselves and other paddlers in the group (peer group paddling acceptable).
- Valid (within 3 years) British Canoeing 4 Star Freestyle Kayak Leader Training. This includes at least 2 days logged experience of formal training in personal skills and leadership. Whilst 2 days is seen as the minimum this would be for individuals with extensive prior experience and realistically 3, 4 or even 5 days may be more appropriate
- British Canoeing White Water Safety and Rescue Training Course (or Rescue 3 Whitewater Rescue Technician) within previous 3 years

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

Craft

Any freestyle kayak that is safe and fit for purpose for the remit of the award and the assessment tasks.

Equipment

Personal and group equipment appropriate for the remit of the award and relevant to the assessment environment and venue.

Trainer and Assessor

British Canoeing 4 Star Freestyle Leader Provider.

Assessment Venue

Assessment takes place on a section of white water (no more than 500m in length). The stretch of moderate white water (up to grade 3) to be used should include:

- Sections of deep moving water and eddies (deep enough to safely roll and capsize)
- A wave suitable for surfing with sufficient depth to be safe
- A hydraulic stopper suitable for surfing with sufficient depth to be safe and easily exited

The wave and stopper may be part of the same feature. It is important that the whole syllabus can be covered without impairment due to venue choice.

Technical Syllabus

Part A

The following core elements are integral to the execution of the core skills. The candidate needs to show evidence of the following core elements within the core skills (A2) that will be demonstrated (section A2 contains examples of how these core elements may be demonstrated within the core skills).

Part A1 – Core Elements

- A1.1 Warm up and down
- A1.2 Mental rehearsal
- A1.3 Posture and connectivity
- A1.4 Rotation and synchronicity
- A1.5 Intensity and relaxation
- A1.6 Control, balance and paddle dexterity
- A1.7 Methods of position and set-up
- A1.8 Methods of initiation
- A1.9 Methods of release/momentum
- A1.10 Methods of recovery
- A1.11 Linking ends and manoeuvres

Part A2 – Core Skills

- A2.1 Rolling
- A2.2 Entering and exiting play features
- A2.3 Cartwheels
- A2.4 Split-wheels
- A2.5 Front loops
- A2.6 Front and back surfing
- A2.7 Blunts
- A2.8 Competition routine

Part B – Rescue Skills

The emphasis for the candidate is that they can be an effective member of a team. This would include that they can look after themselves and others while paddling on grade 2(3) white water (candidates to act as the rescuer, including taking responsibility for the rescue):

- B.1 Demonstrate skilful application of appropriate boat and bank-based safety and rescue skills
- B.2 Incident management and first aid appropriate to the environment
- B.3 Effective team leader
- B.4 Team member in rescues and incidents

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

During the assessment the candidates should show they have the ability to lead others on the successful descent of a 500m section of a grade 2(3) river. These skills will be blended throughout the assessment, and include:

- C.1 Group control and management
- C.2 Personal risk management
- C.3 Awareness of others

Part D – Theory/Knowledge

At the time of assessment candidates must demonstrate a good level of general knowledge of freestyle paddlesport:

- D.1 Equipment - The candidate should have knowledge and experience of using a range of equipment. Know how and why equipment has evolved and how best to use it.
- D.2 Safety - The candidate should have a sound safety framework with use of practical, dynamic risk assessments.
- D.3 Weather - The candidate should know how to understand and interpret weather forecast information from a variety of sources.
- D.4 Wellbeing, health and first aid - The candidate should have the right level of first aid training and know how to apply this training to deal with the most likely paddlesport injuries in a moderate water environment.
- D.5 Freestyle environment - The candidate should have an appreciation of the environment we paddle in; this should be a key underpinning principle for all candidates. Candidates should be aware of our environmental impact and be proactive in minimising this.
- D.6 Competition - The candidate should have an understanding of the basics of UK competition structure and rules.
- D.7 General - The candidate should have a wide general knowledge of all aspects of the sport.
- D.8 Etiquette - The candidate should promote a positive image for paddle sports with other river users and local residents.