

5 Star Surf Leader Assessment Notes

Technical Syllabus

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

A.1 Lifting, carrying, launching and landing

Paddlers should be capable of getting afloat in a range of environments, other than a beach, efficiently and without assistance.

A.2 Control

Paddlers should be capable of a high level of personal performance. The casual observer watching from the beach should be able to identify that the surfer has considerable skill. Five Star paddlers should be able to deliver sequences of moves that show variety and intent, and rarely make errors in terms of positioning.

A.3 Paddle out

As for 4 Star but in addition the paddler should be capable of rolling under waves and display strategies for negotiating pitching waves.

The access to some breaks will require knowledge of tidal movement and group leadership on coastlines with limited landings, and although not a sea leadership award short journeys to inaccessible breaks should form part of the assessment process.

A.4 Take off

Take offs should display decisions based on patience and etiquette, and positioning should be accurate most of the time. Almost all waves attempted are caught, and paddlers should be able to perform more difficult take offs such as paddle outs, regains etc.

On reefs and points the paddler should demonstrate an accurate ability to use transits, foam cones and wave patterns to position themselves with accuracy

A.5 Turning

Bottom turns should be appropriate to the wave, showing a variety of speed and attack. Turns at the top of the wave should display the same characteristics but should show carved and sliding turns with the boat being visible from behind the wave.

Body positions should be accurate and the boat should be seen to be in a permanent state of manoeuvre. Paddle independence will be obvious.

A.6 Variety, pace and attack

Paddlers should display manoeuvres that produce power and accuracy of positioning.

There should be an expectation on an observer's part to see something they weren't expecting rather than the same moves repeated on a number of waves. Attempts should be made to attack approaching lips or close out with re-entries and the foundations of aerial moves should be seen.

A.7 Timing, height and the shoulder

Paddlers should use the whole of the wave face with significant height gain and loss. Although errors will occur they will normally be when paddlers are adjusting to a unique situation developed from ambition around the shoulder or the mistiming of sequences rather than errors in completing the action. The paddlers should be clearly making decisions allowing them to ride using the characteristics of the wave effectively and thus appear to be imposing themselves on the wave. This could be summed up as the paddler clearly illustrating a proactive manner to the ride rather than purely responding to the wave's patterns.

A.8 Roll in advanced surf conditions

Paddlers should have a variety of strategies for applying the rolling skill to the advanced surf environment. It should be evident both as a self-rescue technique, and also as a paddle out strategy.

Part B – Rescue Skills

B.1 Deep-water rescues

B.2 Beach landings

B.3 Water based repairs and first aid

B.4 Rescue management

Paddlers should be able to rescue from a variety of positions with multiple strategies. Complicated rescue scenarios that are indicative of the types of waves surfed should be engineered for both training and assessment at this level. Paddlers should show a solid understanding of the rescue building blocks, and it would be expected that they should be able to display exceptional rescue skills and strategies, in challenging environments and situations not always immediately accessed from a car park.

Part C – Leadership and Group Skills

C.1 Safety awareness and risk management

Five Star paddlers should be capable of leading and managing groups in advanced conditions; they should be able to accurately identify safe working areas, giving full consideration to the identification of risk and taking actions to minimize it.

C.2 Group control and communication

The Five Star leader should be able to manage a group of competent paddlers, and set up a safety framework appropriate to the environment. This should clearly illustrate awareness of risks and the actions taken to lessen the likelihood and severity of those risks. Although not a coaching award the ability to frame a safe learning environment with constructive input or feedback to a less able paddler should be seen as integral to the award.

C.3 Group safety equipment

Equipment at this level should be of a very practical nature and may be spread throughout the group. The scenarios which paddlers will be expected to manage should be realistic and have varied solutions dependant on conditions, equipment available and the decisions made based on the paddlers' experience. Any equipment deemed important should be carried throughout the assessment.

C.4 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision making

Paddlers should give clear demonstrations of their understanding and implementation of the CLAP principles.

C.5 Demonstrate the capability to manage a range of incidents

Paddlers should be able to manage scenarios and situations that occur during leadership opportunities, showing they are capable of managing the group, individual and leader's needs.

C.6 Provide guidance through top tips and handy hints

Paddlers would be expected to make things easier for themselves by helping their groups with a few tips to improve their abilities in the surf. Paddlers are not expected to deliver a coaching session, merely provide a couple of hints and tips that could make the group easier to manage.

Part D – Theory

D.1 Advanced surf forecasting

Paddlers presenting themselves for Five Star assessment should have a sound knowledge of the surf environment. They should be able to make accurate macro surf forecasts and produce comprehensive micro forecasts for the areas to be surfed.

D.2 Wave theory

Paddlers should be able to discuss the bathymetric features of reefs, convex and concave points, thus allowing them to accurately select a venue and understand the wave type encountered.

D.3 Etiquette

Paddlers should understand all aspects of wave etiquette, both in theory and in practical application.

D.4 Wellbeing, health and first aid

Paddlers should demonstrate a problem solving approach to first aid, that is particularly relevant to the environment commonly encountered in advanced surfing. This should include current CPR protocols for water asphyxiation and treatment of cold shock hypothermia

D.5 Equipment and design

Paddlers should be able to discuss the design characteristics that govern speed and manoeuvrability. They should be aware of the effects fins can have, and how to change the feel of a boat through fin movements.

D.6 General knowledge

It would be expected at this level that paddlers should be conversant with the fundamental principles and skill set of beach life guarding, with particular relevance to rescues.