

SCA Paddle Scotland Tours: Overview

1. Scope

This document sets out the roles and responsibilities of the SCA Paddle Scotland Sub-Committee and Tour Leaders in the organisation and running of SCA Paddle Scotland Tours. The document also details the process followed and criteria used by the SCA Paddle Recreation Committee in preparation of the calendar to ensure that tours are safe and enjoyable.

2. Introduction

SCA Paddle Scotland Tours have been designed to offer safe and enjoyable tours that bring together like-minded paddlers. Tours are led by volunteer Tour Leaders who are individually approved by the committee.

3. Types of Tours

3.a. 'Leader Led' or 'Coach Led'

Two different types of tours are offered depending on the Tour Leader's preference and qualifications.

Leader Led Tours

- Where Tour Leader is responsible for leadership of the group and coaching expertise should not be expected by participants.

Coach Led Tours

- Where Tour Leader is suitably qualified and the individual agrees to provide instruction to participants enabling them to learn or refresh certain skills, as appropriate.

3.b. Tour Grades

Tours are graded to inform potential participants of the conditions likely to be encountered and the paddling distances of which they should be capable. Trips are graded from A (lowest) to C (highest).

Grade A	Participants should be capable of paddling 20km (12miles) per day in force 2/3 conditions or on grade 1 -2 rivers.
Grade B	More challenging waters and may include tidal streams, exposed headlands, open crossings on lochs or between islands, or on grade 2(3) rivers. Participants should be capable of paddling 25km (16miles) per day in up to force 4 conditions.
Grade C	Extended Grade B trips over a longer period for inland/sea touring *AND* rivers graded up to 4(5). Participants should be capable of paddling in more difficult conditions than grade B for a longer time.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4. a. SCA Paddle Scotland Committee

The committee is responsible for:

- i. Maintaining a procedure to assess the competence of SCA Paddle Scotland Tour Leaders by making reference to the appropriate British Canoeing coaching, leadership qualification or through other means, and ensuring that Tour Leaders hold valid and appropriate first aid training.
- ii. Following procedure in order to determine that SCA Paddle Scotland Tour Leaders have sufficient local knowledge to lead their specific tours.
- iii. Ensuring proposed tours are graded appropriately.
- iv. Publishing documents that set out expectations for both Tour Leaders and Participants (*Guidelines for Tour Leaders* and *Conditions of Participation*).
- v. Ensuring that Tour Leaders are aware of the *Guidelines for Tour Leaders* and agree to run the tour in accordance with this document.
- vi. Ensuring that participants are aware of the *Conditions of Participation*.
- vii. Ensuring the event is organised in line with the British Canoeing event safety requirements.
- viii. Notifying the SCA office of Tour Leader registrations for recording on the SCA membership database (see section 4, Processes) and ensuring that the assessment of Tour Leaders is updated annually.
- ix. Providing general support to Tour Leaders e.g. vetting tour participants if requested, weather considerations prior to tour etc.

4. b. Tour Leader

The voluntary Tour Leader will be suitably qualified and experienced to lead the trip as verified by the SCA Paddle Scotland Committee (see 4.d. Tour Leader Criteria, below). The Tour Leader is responsible for all aspects of their trip in accordance with the *Guidelines for Tour Leaders*. The SCA Paddle Scotland Committee and SCA office staff provide support for Tour Leaders but are not responsible for the delivery of the tour.

4. c. Participants

All participants must be over the age of 18 years old and must be an SCA Full or Recreational member; or Individual member of a home nation association (BC/CW/CANI). SCA day membership is available for non-members and is redeemable against Full membership for up to 12 months.

By booking and attending a tour, participants agree to the *Conditions of Participation*. Participants are responsible for their own safety and should ensure their skills and abilities meet the requirements of the tour grade.

4. d. Tour Leader Criteria

Voluntary Tour Leaders will be reviewed by the SCA Paddle Scotland Committee and approved using guidelines as defined in the British Canoeing Coaching and Leadership Terms of Reference. These guidelines outline the recommended qualification(s) coaches or leaders should hold to coach/lead in

each environment, and the maximum number of participants they may coach/lead. The Recreation Committee may also make judgement on evidencing of wider experience, references etc.

When reviewing an application for a prospective Tour Leader, consideration will be given to paddling skills, trip planning, incident management, safety, communication and the ability to run an enjoyable trip. As a minimum, Tour Leaders should:

- Hold appropriate British Canoeing coaching, leadership qualification or equivalent experience
- Have valid and appropriate first aid training
- Have sufficient local knowledge to lead their specific tour
- Be able to demonstrate a level of competency in rescue procedures suitable for the grade of trip they propose to organise
- Be a full member of the SCA or other Home Nation

Decisions on Leader suitability will be made by a group of at least three individuals from the SCA Paddle Scotland Committee. The individual members of this group are aware of the responsibility they accept when making decisions regarding the competence of Tour Leaders and are doing so on behalf of the SCA. A record of meeting minutes are available to members and published in SCA Portal.

5. Processes

Applications for Tours are welcomed by any suitably qualified SCA member. The SCA Paddle Scotland Committee review applications for Tour Leaders as stated above.

If anyone other than the original Tour Leader intends to lead the trip on the water, Tour Leaders are required to have the prior agreement of the SCA Paddle Scotland Committee. The committee will follow the above procedure to assure themselves of the new Tour Leader's suitability.

Details and records of Tour Leaders, proposed Tours and itineraries are kept in the SCA office in accordance with data protection policies. Tours are published on the SCA website, social media, and in Scottish Paddler. Bookings for tours are via the SCA Portal, and all payments/administration is handled by the SCA office.

6. Further Reading

[Conditions of Participation](#)

Paddle Scotland [Tours Calendar](#) – filter by 'Recreation Event and then Paddle Scotland Tours'

For prospective Tour Leaders, please email events@canoescotland.org for further information.

To propose a tour, please complete the [tour registration form](#)