



Sea Kayak Safety and Rescue
Sample Programme and Session
Plans

BCAB Sea Kayak Safety and Rescue

Sample Programme and Session Plans

Introduction

This document provides an example of the British Canoeing Awarding Body (BCAB) Sea Kayak Safety and Rescue course programme and the accompanying session plans for the 8 modules.

Tutors are required to obtain, understand and consider the participants' current understanding, knowledge, ability and the typical sea environments that they paddle. This can be done prior to module 1, through introductions or part of a more formal process.

Note: Tutor to participant ratio is maximum 1:6.

The main focus for the Tutor is to ensure all participants are able to contribute, explore and practice. The 7-hour programme does not take into account introductions, information gathering, administration, getting ready or any transportation, the timings provided are for the delivery of the modules.

All modules are interactive, practical sessions, discussing and using equipment, and exploring possible solutions to common issues in a moderate sea environment.

Notes:

1. Maximum of 3 participants immersed in the water at one time.
2. During the water-based modules, helmets must be worn by both the Tutor and all participants.

Participants

Participants need to either hold the British Canoeing Awarding Body Sea Kayak Award or equivalent ability, due to the paddling environment and the boat control required to participate fully in the course.

The Sea Kayak Safety and Rescue course is available for all ages. Tutors should check participants' suitability, as well as having appropriate mechanisms for anyone under 18.

Equipment

Appropriate sea kayaks, sit on top or closed cockpit must be used by participants.

The following equipment needs to be made available throughout the course:

- A selection of tow systems appropriate for a moderate water sea environment;
- VHF radios;
- Personal Location Beacons (PLBs);
- A selection of flares;
- Paddle floats;
- Sources of information for the venue to include weather forecasts, tidal information, swell and surf reports.

Venue

The Sea Kayak Safety and Rescue Course must be delivered in suitable venues that allow participants to practice in both sheltered and moderate conditions but do not exceed a moderate water sea environment.

Course duration

The Sea Kayak Safety and Rescue course is a 7-hour programme that consists of 8 modules, of which can be delivered in a day or modular over a maximum of an eight-week period that suits the participants.

Time of year and water temperature

It is crucial that courses are run at appropriate times in the year that provide an appropriate learning environment, enabling the course to be delivered as outlined with participants immersed in the water. Care is advised and courses should not run when water and air temperatures are low.

SEA KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE COURSE PROGRAMME

Module	Time	Module Outline
Module 1	30 minutes	Sources of Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Times of high and low water • Tidal ranges and streams • Weather • Swell and surf information
Module 2	30 minutes	Safety Frameworks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate water sea environment and choice of location • Personal clothing and group equipment • Means of attracting attention • Calling for help
Module 3	60 minutes	Contact and Towing Rescues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towing systems
Module 4	60 minutes	Self-Rescues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-rescues • Assisted self-rescues
Module 5	120 minutes	Deep Water Rescues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rescuing and emptying sea kayaks • Techniques for getting a swimmer out of the water • Multiple rescues • Unconscious / unresponsive rescues
Module 6	30 minutes	Dealing with Equipment Damage/Failure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost day hatch • Flooded bulkhead • Skeg failure

Module 7	60 minutes	<p>Landing and First Aid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landing a casualty through surf or onto rocks • First aid at sea and on the shoreline
Module 8	30 minutes	<p>Reflection and Skills Checklist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections from the course • Reflections on own learning and areas for development • Skills checklists

SEA KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 1

Module Title:	Sources of Information
Time:	30 minutes
Module Outline:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Times of high and low water • Tidal ranges and streams • Weather • Swell and surf information 	
Delivery:	
<p>In one group explore sources of information for the venue, including tides, weather, swell and surf reports.</p> <p>Note: This module is not a replacement for a tidal/weather course, it is focused on raising awareness in the importance of understanding the sea environment that they will be paddling.</p> <p>Explore sources, discuss and show as a group (remembering to keep it within the context of the moderate water sea environment).</p> <p>Times of high and low water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the group what they understand about tides, show sources of gaining the tide times and use the sand, or other ways, to visually show tide moves throughout the period of a day. <p>Tidal ranges and streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a group, explore sources of tidal stream information, and the effects throughout the day, with an emphasis on how the day should be planned to get use out of any tidal movement. Show the appropriate source of information, either through an app on the phone, or tidal stream charts. 	

Weather considerations:

Using resources, encourage the group to consider the weather considerations:

- Discuss where to obtain weather forecasts and what to take into consideration, show apps from a phone and websites available/ screenshots if no service is available;
- Explain about wind strength and direction, including **off-shore winds**/outlook and temperature. These considerations are all significant in deciding where to go and what to wear;
- Emphasise why it is important to observe the actual conditions vs. forecast. Are the water and conditions aligned to the forecast?
- Emphasise the importance of not underestimating the wind, both strength and direction, as well as how the land can affect wind strengths and directions with funnelling effects;
- Raise awareness of cold-water shock, hypothermia, heat exhaustion, dehydration and sunstroke.

Swell and surf information:

- Get the group to consider swell and surf information, discussing how this, with the other information, can inform what to expect throughout the day whilst on the water. Provide examples of swell and surf reports, and how this will affect the conditions on the sea.

Notes:

Throughout, encourage participants to reflect on the learning from this module and openly discuss as a group.

SEA KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 2

Module Title:	Safety Frameworks
Time:	30 minutes
Module Outline:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate water sea environment and choice of location • Personal clothing and group equipment • Means of attracting attention • Calling for help 	
Delivery:	
Moderate water sea environment and choice of location:	
In a group, explore and highlight the moderate water sea environment:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the different moderate water sea environments – tidal, surf, rock gardens, steep cliffs, access points etc.; • Together, explore the sources of information discussed in module 1 to consider an appropriate moderate water location for the course. 	
Personal clothing and group equipment:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the need for considering the time of year and weather when choosing appropriate clothing; • Discuss and show appropriate personal equipment for sea kayaking and options to carrying as well as the importance of equipment being accessible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Towline; ○ Means of attracting attention as well as calling for help; ○ Spare clothing; ○ Small first aid kit; ○ Food and drink; ○ Small repair kit – replacement hatch/fixing a crack boat, etc.. 	

- Show additional group safety equipment that is highly recommended to carry:
 - Group shelter;
 - Spare paddles (splits);
 - Group first aid kit.

Means of attracting attention:

- Explore how to attract attention and communication within the group whilst at sea, and landing in more complex environments such as surf and rock gardens, use of hand signals, use of paddles, whistles, etc.,
- Discuss and show other methods of calling in help – emphasise the difficulties in isolated venues, steep cliffs and limited coverage, etc.,

Calling for help:

- Discuss and show the use of a VHF (DSC) radio, to call for help,
- Promote the use of a Personal Location Beacon (PLB) in raising the alarm.

Notes:

Safety frameworks and equipment must be revisited on each of the modules as either setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

Throughout, encourage participants to reflect on the learning from this module and openly discuss as a group.

SEA KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 3

Module Title:	Contact and Towing Rescues
Time:	60 minutes
Module Outline:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towing systems 	
Delivery:	
<p>In a group, remind participants of the need to consider low-risk to high-risk rescues, and that although it may be necessary to tow, adding rope increases the risk, to the rescuer, the persons being towed, as well as other group members.</p> <p>Discuss, show and allow participants to practice the key principles of towing on land before putting into practice on the water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision of when to tow; • Quick release system; • Attachment points to the craft being towed (deck lines); • Support from others in the group. <p>Throughout, provide scenarios to enable participants to explore and understand context of the techniques being used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A paddler is feeling tired from paddling and needs assistance, practice towing for approximately 200 metres using a waist mounted tow; • A paddler is struggling with sea sickness and requires both support and towing to get back to shore/calmer water. Practice a rafted tow for approximately 100 metres, then adding another tow in the system for an in-line tow; • A paddler has capsized near to rocks or in a gully, and requires a contact tow to move them away from immediate danger, whilst their kayak is recovered by another paddler using a short tow system. 	

Notes:

Provide opportunities for participants to tow over a variety of distances for them to experience effectiveness and efficiency of the systems adopted.

Emphasise there are circumstances that towing further to land is a safe and more appropriate option

Safety frameworks and principles covered must be revisited either when setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

Other towing techniques will be introduced in Module 5 during deep water rescues.

Throughout, encourage participants to reflect on the learning from this module and openly discuss as a group.

SEA KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 4

Module Title:	Self-Rescues
Time:	60 minutes
<p>Module Outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-rescues • Assisted self-rescues <p>Notes:</p> <p>Only 3 participants to be immersed in the water at one time.</p> <p>Delivery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate, explore and practice simple and effective methods of good practice self-rescue techniques; • The emphasis should be on a successful self-rescue, which for some could mean assistance is required, either from other paddlers or a paddle float; • Highlight the importance of remaining in contact with their craft and paddle, and how wind and swell can easily separate them; • Throughout, introduce the self-rescue practice period of how others can be of assistance during a self-rescue, and the importance of getting out of the water efficiently and safely. <p>Examples:</p> <p>Capsize in deep water and gain assistance from another paddler to help empty the water, stabilise and climb back into the kayak.</p> <p>Capsize in deep water, empty the water unassisted and climb back into their craft with and without a paddle float.</p> <p>Capsize in deep water, and carry out a re-entry roll.</p>	

Notes

This phase of the course can be tiring for some participants, so ensure they can rest in-between attempts.

Use sheltered water venues to practise before venturing into a moderate water sea environment.

It is important that participants are confident they have a self-rescue technique that works for them, either on their own or assisted.

Safety frameworks and principles must be revisited either when setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

SEA KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 5

Module Title:	Deep Water Rescues
Time:	120 minutes
<p>Module Outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rescuing and emptying sea kayaks • Techniques for getting a swimmer out of the water • Multiple rescues • Unconscious / unresponsive rescues <p>Note: Only 3 participants to be immersed in the water at one time.</p>	
<p>Delivery:</p> <p>Rescuing and emptying sea kayaks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind participants of safe manual handling, the use of appropriate technique and the use of assistance; • Demonstrate appropriate and effective methods, explore and practice in pairs; • Raise awareness and the importance of keeping contact with the person in the water, as well as the equipment. <p>Techniques for getting swimmers out of the water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show various methods of getting swimmers back into their craft, heel hook, over the back deck, ensuring a low profile for stability; • Demonstrate how a tape/stirrup can be used for those who may need assistance back into their craft. <p>Multiple rescues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In context to a moderate water sea environment, discuss how to conduct rescues of multiple swimmers and their craft; • As a group, explore low-risk to high-risk (for example direct those able to, to self-rescue, use of assistance, priorities of rescue); 	

- Introduce the use of a towline to maintain position during a deep-water rescue to avoid drifting onto rocks or other more dangerous environments.

Unconscious / unresponsive rescues:

- Explore options to recover the unconscious/unresponsive paddler back into their craft. These options could utilise other group members;
- Demonstrate and practice a scoop rescue;
- Introduce the importance of ensuring and checking the unconscious person is breathing and the urgency of calling for help;
- Introduce the next stages of a rafted tow and making head way to land.

Notes:

This phase of the course can be tiring for some participants, so ensure they can rest in-between attempts.

Safety frameworks and principles must be revisited either when setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

It is important that participants are confident they have the ability to rescue others in deep water in a moderate water sea environment.

SEA KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 6

Module Title:	Dealing with Equipment Damage/Failure
Time:	30 minutes
Module Outline:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost day hatch • Flooded bulkhead • Skeg failure 	
Delivery:	
<p>This module is about appropriate fixes out at sea, before heading back to land for a more substantial repair/replacement.</p>	
Lost day hatch:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind participants the importance of avoidance and that checks on the land can reduce this from happening; • Demonstrate appropriate methods of removing excess water and providing a temporary solution to the missing hatch. 	
Flooded bulkhead:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show various methods of temporarily repairing a split/damaged hull; • Demonstrate how, with assistance, to keep the paddler out of the water whilst a temporary repair is being carried out; • Raise awareness of how craft with water in large compartment areas can adversely affect the handling of the boat, and support maybe required through the use of a rafted tow system. 	
Skeg failure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and explore approaches to avoid or reduce skeg failure; • Show and demonstrate on the water solutions to fix a skeg; • On land, show how a more substantial repair can be made to a skeg. 	

Note:

Safety frameworks and principles must be revisited either when setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

SEA KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 7

Module Title:	Landing and First Aid
Time:	60 minutes
Module Outline:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landing a casualty through surf or onto rocks • First aid at sea and on the shoreline 	
Delivery:	
<p>This module explores how to land a casualty in more complex environments, as well as administering basic first aid treatment at sea and on the shoreline.</p> <p>Landing a casualty through moderate surf or onto rocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind participants the importance of <u>avoidance</u> of landing in complex environments, and that it may be more appropriate to paddle further to a more suitable landing or stay out at sea and wait for assistance; • Explain or demonstrate in sheltered water appropriate methods and tactics of landing a casualty in surf; • Explain, demonstrate and allow the participants to practise appropriately landing a casualty onto rocks. <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis to all participants the importance of <u>avoidance</u> of landing in complex environments, and that safety of everyone is paramount. It may be more appropriate to paddle further to a more suitable landing or stay out at sea and wait for assistance; • Important to raise awareness of calling for help early 	

First aid at sea and on the shoreline:

Discuss the typical injuries that occur on the sea whilst sea kayaking, and how carrying a small, simple, well thought out first kit can deal with the majority of common issues.

Provide scenarios throughout, enabling participants to explore and understand context of the techniques being used:

- A paddler with painful blisters caused by their paddle;
- A paddler with severe lacerations on their hand from a rock;
- A tired and dehydrated paddler;
- Sea sickness;
- A cold and exhausted paddler;
- Pain in the wrists (Tenosynovitis).

Safety frameworks and principles must be revisited either when setting tasks or as a reflection focus.

SEA KAYAK SAFETY AND RESCUE COURSE

MODULE 8

Module Title:	Reflection and Skills Checklists
Time:	30 minutes
Module Outline:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections from the course • Reflections on own learning and areas for development • Skills checklists 	
Delivery:	
<p>Reflections from the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a group, discuss and share key learning points, what worked well, what was difficult, what solutions did you come up with. Use a format to capture the learning to aid and support individual reflections. 	
<p>Reflections on own learning and areas for development :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In pairs, discuss your areas of strength and what you would like to develop, use the skills checklist to aid discussions. 	
<p>Skills checklist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants complete their skills checklist with the Tutor and agree areas for development, and ideas on how to complete the development areas identified. 	