



CLUB COACHES / INSTRUCTORS / LEADERS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Definitions of an Instructor, Coach and Leader are:

- **Instructor:** provides introductory/taster sessions
- **Coach:** specifically concentrates on the individual's skill and knowledge development
- **Leader:** leads a group of paddlers in appropriate locations and environments, ensuring safety of the individuals within the group.

2. Responsibilities:

- All coaches, Instructors and leaders should be suitably qualified for the paddle discipline and level they are instructing, coaching, or leading.
- All coaches, Instructors and leaders are, on completion of their qualification, committing to complete a minimum of 20 CPD points for each 3-year period. Further information can be found at: [Keeping Up To Date](#)
- Coaches, instructors, or leaders are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of all students, paddlers during organised club sessions, including, maintaining the correct coach paddler ratios set out by Paddle UK. See para 5 & 6.
- Specific Risk Assessments (SRA) should be produced using the hierarchy of control measures; (*Elimination, substitution, engineering control, administrative & PPE*) and reviewed by the Head Coach prior to delivery of any coaching, training, or journey.
- A Dynamic Risk Assessment (DRA) should be conducted during the coaching, training, or journey with conditions continuously monitored. The session should be adapted to support any changeable risk. It is recommended that these changes are recorded during the session to enable a detailed review once the session has finished.
- Coaches, instructors, or leaders should, where required, ensure they have an in-date and suitable first aid qualification specific for the sessions they are delivering.
- Land base supervision is not suitable unless an additional coach is on the water and included within the session.

3. Guidance for coaching beginner sessions (on the Kennet and Avon)

- All paddlers are to be made familiar with the coaching session risk assessment and the hazards identified including the mitigation to reduce those hazards.
- All paddlers and coaches engaged with a coaching session will always wear buoyancy aids.

- The teaching progression should follow the Paddle UK guidelines: (See links below)
 - [Start Award](#) – Initial taster course.
 - [Discover Award](#) – Basic course.
 - [Explore Award](#) – Building on Discover skills gaining more confidence.

4. Risk Assessment

- The Kennet and Avon Canal presents few natural hazards, Club Coaches need to ensure all foreseen hazards are included within their risk assessment for the session they are delivering. Some examples of hazards are as follows:
 - Draw effect from several weirs on the canal.
 - Other craft of all sizes.
 - Fishermen and their lines crossing the canal.
 - Wildlife (swans, ducks, geese etc.)
 - Portaging and public when carrying boats.
 - Slips, trips, and falls.
 - Manual handling of boats to, from and in, out of the canal.
 - Weather forecast changes.
 - Flow of water.

- An example of a Starter Course Risk Assessment based from NCC can be found [here](#)

5. Very Sheltered Water Definition

Quiet canals with easy bankside access and egress; small lakes, which are not large enough and do not have difficult landing, where problems could occur if there is a sudden change in conditions; gentle, slow moving rivers. The definition implies weather conditions that are not in themselves likely to cause problems. At any point, the paddler should not be more than 50 metres from the bank.

Enclosed swimming pools are also defined as very sheltered water environments.

Note: The definition implies normal conditions and care is advised when water and air temperatures are low.



Suggested Coach/Leader to Participant ratio



Solo Craft 1:8



Crew Craft 1:12

Factors to take into consideration



Experience of the Instructor/Coach/Leader



The individual group members' age/competence/experience



The ever-changing environment

Suggested Minimum Qualifications (Full list on page 8 & 9)

British Canoeing Awarding Body Paddlesport Instructor / British Canoeing Awarding Body Stand Up Paddleboard Instructor / British Canoeing Awarding Body Paddlesport Leader

6. Sheltered Water Definition

Ungraded sections of slow moving rivers where the group could paddle upstream against the flow (not involving the shooting of, or playing on, weirs or running rapids). Areas of open water (e.g. lakes and lochs) where the paddlers are no more than 200 metres offshore and the wind strength does not exceed Beaufort force 3, avoiding the group being swept/blown out of the safe working area. Slow moving estuaries (less than 0.5 Knots).

Examples: Small enclosed bays, enclosed harbours where there is minimal possibility of being blown offshore, defined beaches with easy places to land throughout, no tide races, overfalls or surf.

Note: The definition implies normal conditions and care is advised when water and air temperatures are low.



Suggested Coach/Leader to Participant ratio



Solo Craft 1:8



Crew Craft 1:12

Factors to take into consideration



Experience of the Instructor/Coach/Leader



The individual group members' age/
competence/experience



The ever-changing environment

Suggested Minimum Qualifications (Full list on page 8 & 9)

British Canoeing Paddlesport Instructor (completed before 01/01/2019) / British Canoeing Awarding Body Paddlesport Leader

7. Moderate & Advance Water Definitions

- For further definitions please navigate to the Paddle UK website [Paddle UK](https://www.paddleuk.com)

8. Further Coach, instructor, and leader safety information

- [Guidance for Coaches and Leaders | How-to Guides](#)
- [Paddlesafer-V7-2024](#)
- **Crib Cards:**
 - [1.-Canoe-and-Kayak-Safety-Quickguide.pdf \(gopaddling.info\)](#)
 - [2.-Stand-Up-Paddleboard-Safety-Quickguide.pdf \(gopaddling.info\)](#)
 - [5.-Inland-Waterway-Safety-Quickguide.pdf \(gopaddling.info\)](#)
 - [6.-Weather-and-Tides-Safety-Quickguide.pdf \(gopaddling.info\)](#)
 - [7.-Equipment-Safety-Quickguide.pdf \(gopaddling.info\)](#)
- **Craft pre-paddle safety checklist.**
 - [Kayaking Safety Checklist](#)
 - [SUP safety tips and checklist](#)
 - [Canoeing safety checklist](#)