

## Water Sports Risk Assessment

**Activity:** Canoes, Kayaking, Pedalos and raft building

**What are the hazards?**

- The water,
- Unauthorized use of equipment
- Hypothermia
- Other water users (anglers), including getting hooked by fishing lines
- Glass, sharp objects underwater and on the ground around the activity base.
- Dropping equipment and being hit by equipment
- Infection from cuts including Weil's disease.
- Unable to return to the bank due to fatigue or lack of skill
- Manual handling

**Who is at risk?**

Staff, participants and members of the public.

What are the risks?	Existing safety measures/controls	Likelihood	Risk Rating
<p>Hypothermia – most likely caused by falling into cold water</p> <p>Drowning from capsize/overboard (on session)</p> <p>Non-swimmers using equipment outside sessions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good instructor awareness – understanding of water temperatures and seasonal closure of certain activities.</li> <li>• Cag tops and wet suits available if necessary.</li> <li>• Survival blanket available</li> <li>• Buoyancy aids or life jackets worn on every session</li> <li>• Qualified instructors (BCU level 1 or above coaches) trained in rescues on every session.</li> <li>• Swimming ability section on medical form to be completed for all participants.</li> <li>• A radio and first aid kit available at the activity base for all sessions.</li> <li>• Emergency action plans in place including access to Oxygen and Defibrillator.</li> <li>• On raft building and pedalo sessions an "Overboard" briefing given to all participants</li> <li>• On canoe and kayak sessions a "capsize" briefing given to all</li> </ul>	LOW	MEDIUM

	<p>participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Aid trained instructors on each session.</li> <li>• Life rings positioned around the lake. Danger signs erected.</li> <li>• All equipment is secured when not in use</li> <li>• Boat house unlocked during session.</li> <li>• Warm showers in boat house</li> <li>• Participants not encouraged to enter the water.</li> </ul>		
Getting hooked or tangled in fishing lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good instructor briefings and awareness</li> <li>• All anglers given lake rules prior to fishing.</li> <li>• Designated fishing and lake sports areas.</li> <li>• No over casting allowed.</li> <li>• Lake induction given to all new instructors.</li> <li>• Instructors carry knives on sessions.</li> <li>• Regular patrols by maintenance staff to clear anglers' lines and rubbish.</li> </ul>	LOW	LOW
Cuts – in particular injuries to feet. Potential later infection including Weil's disease.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footwear on all lake sessions is compulsory. Securely fitting, closed toed.</li> <li>• Good instructor briefing and instructor awareness.</li> <li>• All instructors are first aid trained.</li> <li>• All cuts cleaned and covered and first aid kit at activity base.</li> <li>• Participants warned of possible symptoms.</li> <li>• Participants advised to wash immediately after sessions, particularly if they have been in water.</li> <li>• Participants not encouraged to enter the water.</li> </ul>	LOW	LOW

<p>Twisted ankles and broken bones from trips slips and falls and from carrying or dropping equipment. Sprained muscles. Cuts and Bruises</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good instructor awareness and briefing.</li> <li>• No running around the activity base.</li> <li>• Participants shown how to carry and hold equipment correctly.</li> <li>• Encourage teamwork.</li> <li>• Group leaders to assist in-group control.</li> <li>• Participants are shown how to get into and out of boats properly and have their boats stabilized by a group member, leader or instructor if required</li> <li>• Group leader to assist in seal launching participant's kayaks if required</li> <li>• Seal launch procedures organised (i.e. one at a time and spaced out)</li> <li>• Instructor afloat before participants when appropriate.</li> <li>• All participants given a paddle and explained what to do if they capsize.</li> </ul>	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>
<p>Entrapment, being stuck under raft or boat.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rafts tested for integrity and poor designs adjusted before being allowed on the water.</li> <li>• Instructors aware of poor designs rafts and will help in a rebuild/improve if necessary.</li> <li>• First Aid qualified staff on session.</li> <li>• Good instructor briefing and awareness.</li> <li>• Instructors to carry rescue knives on the water.</li> <li>• All group members advised of the safe methods to carry equipment, and when moving rafts all team members should help.</li> </ul> <p>Good instructor awareness and briefing.</p> <p>In event of capsize participants asked not to swim under boat.</p> <p>Capsize/overboard brief given to all participants before going on the water.</p>	<p>LOW</p>	<p>MEDIUM</p>

Being hit by paddles when playing games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only appropriate games for the group's age and ability levels will be played.</li> <li>• The instructor will supervise games.</li> <li>• Helmets are issued if there is a high potential for head injury. If one participant wears a helmet, everyone, including the instructor will also wear a helmet.</li> <li>• Good instructor briefing and monitoring</li> </ul>	LOW	LOW
Vehicle related injuries from nearby drive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-operation in-group control by group leaders.</li> <li>• Speed restrictions signs posted</li> <li>• Limited vehicle access</li> <li>• Good instructor awareness of group and environment</li> </ul>	LOW	LOW
Human error – groups not listening to briefings and not taking in vital information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full co-operation from leaders in group control and discipline.</li> <li>• Instructor will ensure group understanding</li> </ul>	LOW	LOW
Injury due to poor manual handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant will not be involved in getting the pedalos off the water</li> <li>• Removing the Pedalos off the water will be supervised by a senior member of staff and use a vehicle to help</li> <li>• Staff receive annual update on manual handling</li> <li>• All instructors trained in rescue techniques with British Canoeing-Foundation Safety and Rescue award</li> <li>• Air bags/ blocks in Kayaks and Canoes to limit water/weight.</li> <li>• Group encouraged to help each other, and use the group leader where appropriate.</li> </ul>	LOW	MEDIUM

Language barriers with non-English speaking groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translators required and to be provided by group for non-English or limited English speakers.</li> <li>This is checked with group leaders before sessions along with general information / medical checks.</li> </ul>	LOW	LOW
Injuries from faulty equipment	<p>Due to the infrequency of use the pedalos will be inspected prior to use by a lake qualified person</p> <p>All equipment visually inspected before issuing out.</p> <p>Regular safety checks of other equipment and PPE recorded and monitored on Papertrail.</p>	LOW	LOW
Weils disease, Leptospirosis, biological contaminants	<p>All cuts and abrasions have waterproof plasters prior to the session commencing. Any significant wound/opening to the body to be discussed with individual/group leader (senior staff to support if needed) to determine whether the risk of infection is acceptable.</p> <p>Groups told to wash hands and faces after the session and/or before eating/drinking.</p> <p>Group encouraged to shower following sessions especially if entered the water.</p> <p>Instructors to encourage staying on the boat/craft rather than entering the water.</p> <p>Information available on signs and symptoms.</p> <p>Instructors to be vigilant for signs of disease spreading (e.g. seeing rats) and report this to the CI to inform the Maintenance Supervisor.</p>	LOW	LOW

Reference to other manuals:

- British Canoeing Guidelines
- [UK Youth Health and Safety policy](#)

When was the assessment reviewed and by whom?

November 2017

Chief Instructor

Date of next review and to be done by whom?

November 2018

Chief Instructor