

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"> • Good instructor awareness – understanding of water temperatures and seasonal closure of certain activities. • Cag tops and wet suits available if necessary. • Survival blanket available • Buoyancy aids or life jackets worn on every session • Qualified instructors (BCU level 1 or above coaches) trained in rescues on every session. • Swimming ability section on medical form to be completed for all participants. • A radio and first aid kit available at the activity base for all sessions. • Emergency action plans in place including access to Oxygen and Defibrillator. • On raft building and pedalo sessions an “Overboard’ briefing given to all participants • On canoe and kayak sessions a “capsize’ briefing given to all 	LOW	MEDIUM

	<p>participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid trained instructors on each session. • Life rings positioned around the lake. Danger signs erected. • All equipment is secured when not in use • Boat house unlocked during session. • Warm showers in boat house • Participants not encouraged to enter the water. 		
Getting hooked or tangled in fishing lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good instructor briefings and awareness • All anglers given lake rules prior to fishing. • Designated fishing and lake sports areas. • No over casting allowed. • Lake induction given to all new instructors. • Instructors carry knives on sessions. • Regular patrols by maintenance staff to clear anglers' lines and rubbish. 	LOW	LOW
Cuts – in particular injuries to feet. Potential later infection including Weil's disease.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footwear on all lake sessions is compulsory. Securely fitting, closed toed. • Good instructor briefing and instructor awareness. • All instructors are first aid trained. • All cuts cleaned and covered and first aid kit at activity base. • Participants warned of possible symptoms. • Participants advised to wash immediately after sessions, particularly if they have been in water. • Participants not encouraged to enter the water. 	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"> • Good instructor awareness and briefing. • No running around the activity base. • Participants shown how to carry and hold equipment correctly. • Encourage teamwork. • Group leaders to assist in-group control. • 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 • Group leader to assist in seal launching participant's kayaks if required • Seal launch procedures organised (i.e. one at a time and spaced out) • Instructor afloat before participants when appropriate. • All participants given a paddle and explained what to do if they capsize. 	<p>LOW</p>	<p>LOW</p>
<p>Entrapment, being stuck under raft or boat.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rafts tested for integrity and poor designs adjusted before being allowed on the water. • Instructors aware of poor designs rafts and will help in a rebuild/improve if necessary. • First Aid qualified staff on session. • Good instructor briefing and awareness. • Instructors to carry rescue knives on the water. • All group members advised of the safe methods to carry equipment, and when moving rafts all team members should help. <p>Good instructor awareness and briefing. In event of capsize participants asked not to swim under boat. Capsize/overboard brief given to all participants before going on the water.</p>	<p>LOW</p>	<p>MEDIUM</p>

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

Language barriers with non-English speaking groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translators required and to be provided by group for non-English or limited English speakers. • This is checked with group leaders before sessions along with general information / medical checks. 	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 2018

Chief Instructor

Date of next review and to be done by whom?

November 2019

Chief Instructor