

4 Star Leader Award - Sea Kayak - Syllabus

Aim

Successful performance at this level indicates that a candidate has the personal skill level and leadership ability required to:

- Lead a group of 4 competent* (not including themselves) paddlers, on short (six to eight miles, of at least three hours paddling). Journeys in moderate tidal water environment with winds not exceeding force 4/Sea State 4.
- Judge the conditions and the standard of the group and make appropriate decisions about the planned route along with the need to modify plans as required.

*Competent = Paddlers who do not require coaching to be in/on that environment.

The 4 Star Leader award is a leadership award and not a coaching award. It is not suitable for introducing beginners to the sport.

Following assessment 4 Star Leaders must have in place 3rd Party Liability cover (included in comprehensive Home Nation membership), knowledge of Child Protection guidelines and good practice including checks where necessary and maintain evidence of currency.

Pre-requisites – Training

- BCU 3 Star Sea or old 4 Star Sea Award

Pre-requisites - Assessment

- Previous experience - Provide documented evidence of a minimum of 10 sea trips (minimum 4 hours duration) During 5 of these trips the candidate must assume an assistant leader role. (The above extensive range of sea kayak journeys should include a variety of coastlines, sea states, sea areas, periods of limited visibility, tidal waters up to 3 knots, wind up to and including force 4 / Sea State 4 and could camping from a kayak)
- Recognised First aid award (minimum 8hrs training including CPR) within the last 3 years
- Relevant Leadership Training - 4 Star Leader Sea training OR 'old' in-date trainee Level 3 sea status within the last 3 years.
- Relevant Safety Training - Coastal Navigation and Tidal Planning similar NGB structured theoretical navigation course
- Home Nation Registration (LR Form)
- Aged 18 years or above. Candidates under the age of 18 can take the award, but cannot be deemed responsible for leadership by law until they turn 18 and must hold a current first aid award and have BCU coaching membership or private insurance.

Craft

Sea Kayak, suitable for the remit of the award and the assessment environment

Equipment

Personal and group equipment appropriate for the remit of the award and relevant to the assessment environment

VHF – when considering a means of summoning emergency assistance the leader must clarify, in areas they paddle, the necessity to carry a VHF set. If carried, the leader must have attended a formal VHF operator's course as per legal requirements.

The candidate is required to perform all skills on both sides.
If the kayak is fitted with a rudder, it must be disabled for the duration of the assessment.

Assessment Venue

The conditions for the assessment must include:

- Tidal areas
- Periods of no less than Sea state 4 (or a tidal flow creating similar conditions)
- A featured and committing coastline with available landings at least every 1-2 miles / 1 hr and areas where it is not easy to land.
- Launching and landing through small surf, less than 1 metre.

Durations

Training: 2 days

Assessment: 18 hours

Staffing

For details of staffing requirements and ratios, please refer to the latest version of the BCU Staffing Requirements and Ratios document, available from the BCU or Home Nation websites. Training and Assessment may only be conducted by those qualified and registered to do so.

For details of registering as a 4 Star Leader White Water Provider, refer to the BCU document 'Becoming a 4 Star Provider'

Administration

Refer to the latest version of the BCU Star Test Guidance Notes for details on the administration of pre and post course paperwork for both candidates and trainers/assessors.

Staff should also refer to the current version of the Trainer / Assessor notes.

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

NB – Candidates must be capable of performing practical skills in force 4/5 winds / minimum Sea State 4

- A.1 Lifting, carrying and launching/landing
- A.2 Efficient and effective sea paddling skills
 - Forward paddling
 - Reversing and Stopping
 - Maintaining Direction
 - Changing Direction
 - Moving Sideways
 - Supporting
- A.3 Rolling
- A.4 Practical Navigation

Part B – Rescue Skills

- B.1 Demonstrate skilful application of appropriate boat and shore-based safety and rescue skills
 - Rescue capsized paddler and equipment
 - Self Rescue
 - Towing
 - Carry
 - Shepherding
- B.2 Effective team leader in rescue / incident scenarios.

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

- C.1 Skilful application of leadership (e.g. CLAP) principles
- C.2 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision-making
- C.3 Safety awareness and risk management
- C.4 Group control and management
- C.5 Incident Management

Part D – Theory

- D.1 Equipment and design
- D.2 Safety (includes Coastguard and rescue services)
- D.3 Weather
- D.4 Hypothermia/First aid
- D.5 Access
- D.6 Environment
- D.7 Planning
- D.8 Group Awareness and Management
- D.10 Navigation
- D.11 Consideration of other water users (include collision regulations and signals)
- D.12 General (e.g. history)

- D.13 Leadership Responsibilities
- D.14 Water Features / Hazards (include tidal planning)

