

# **Level 1 Raft Guide**

## **Level 1 Raft Guide (restricted, site specific):**

This level will be a site-specific raft guide who has completed a BCU approved training course, and has been passed as competent to guide with clients on a single river.

### **Raft course recommended minimum content**

#### **1) Equipment:**

##### **Rafts:**

Design, construction, materials, valves, repair.

Loading, unloading, transport

Correct inflation/deflation, working pressures.

Rigging of rafts, frames, equipment within the raft, oar rigs.

Paddles, guide and client

Equipment carried in boat, single/multi day

Rescue / wrap kit

##### **Personal:**

Guide equipment / Personal safety kit

Client equipment

First aid kits

Throwlines

#### **2) Pre trip procedures:**

Client safety briefing, medical briefing

Dangers of alcohol and drugs

Loading and launching of rafts

Tying up boats



### **3) Raft handling skills:**

#### **Paddling strokes:**

**Guide** - forward and reverse sweep, pry, draw, rudder and/or rowing techniques- pulling, pushing (portage), turning.

**Client** – forwards, backwards, left turn, right turn.

#### **Boat handling:**

Momentum and drift

Positioning in waves and holes

Break ins, break outs,

Ferry gliding

Highsides

Distribution of crew for optimum balance and power

### **4) River skills:**

Rapid reading - identifying whitewater features, from the boat and from bank (scouting)

Rapid running – Choosing and running a line in a rapid using appropriate techniques

Throwline use, from bank and boat

Positioning of boat to pick up swimmers

Lining and portaging, care of crew and equipment.

Assessing of crew and rapids, judging what is and what is not, feasible to run.

Motivation of crew

International grading system of rivers, local examples

### **5) Rescue equipment and use:**

Use and storage of ropes, slings, prussiks, pulleys, carabiners and other rescue hardware

Knots and basic ropework, no knots, figure of eights, bowline, clovehitch, Italian hitch.

Shallow water crossings

Mechanical advantage systems, 3:1 z drag, 4:1 pig rigs.  
Rescue / wrap kit, contents, appropriateness.

## **6) Communication:**

With passengers – paddling commands

With other rafts – system of signals - stop, eddie out, emergency, first aid required, move closer, spread out, lost paddle, swimmer.

Use of whistle – 1 blast stop, attention. 3 blasts repeated, emergency

## **7) Emergencies:**

Factors contributing to accidents, poor equipment, strainers, swimmers, high water, bad judgement, importance of maintaining visual contact with other boats.

### **General emergency procedures:**

Situation assessment, deciding on a course of action, carrying out an effective rescue using resources available, time limits and safety priorities, informing and using crew effectively.

### **Situations:**

- **Swimmers**, long or short swimmers
- **Wraps**, likely places on river, priorities
- **Tensioned diagonals**, correct angle, appropriate water
- **Multiple swimmers**, use of boat, throwline
- **Foot entrapment**, speed of rescue appropriate technique for situation
- **Stranded crew member**, reach, throw, row, go principle
- **Flips**, priorities - dependant on river, basics - head count, reflip or pull up passengers.



- **Hypothermia and Hyperthermia**, differences, precautions, treatment.

## **8) The environment:**

Minimum impact techniques.

Erosion problems associated with regularly used sites.

Other river users, consideration and courtesy.

SSSI's

Good rafting code of conduct.

## **Level 1 Training:**

It is possible to attend a raft guide training at the age of 16, though it should be remembered that the minimum age is 18 for raft assessment.

Course to cover the recommended minimum content for a BCU raft guide's course. This course should be a minimum of 2 days, and could be completed modularly.

## **Level 1 assessment format -Syllabus:**

### **Prerequisites:**

- 18 years old
- National association comprehensive member
- Attended a Level 1 raft guide training course
- Current first aid certificate (min 8 hours including CPR and EAV)
- Have logged a minimum of 10 training trips / sessions between training and assessment

All candidates should ensure that they have met all the requirements as set out in the Prerequisites for level 1 assessment.

### **Assessment:**

Candidates for level 1 Raft Guide assessment, should satisfy the exam-

iners that they have the experience, judgement and competence necessary to guide a raft, with clients, on the river that they are being assessed on.

Suitable rivers for assessment would include sections of grade 3 and be of a suitable length that all the necessary guiding and customer care skills needed for this level of award, can be demonstrated.

### **Equipment:**

The candidate's personal and group kit will be evaluated. Borrowed equipment will be assessed as if it were the candidates own. Any equipment carried must be appropriate for the size of group and prevalent conditions on the day of assessment.

### **Theory:**

The candidate should have a working knowledge on a range of rafting related subjects, to include:

- Raft design, including different makes of raft and their pros and cons.

- Equipment to be carried on a rafting trip.

- River grading's, to include local examples.

- Appropriate guide skills, and any problems specific to rafting.

- Environmental issues.

- First aid and resuscitation, first aid kit contents.

- Client / customer care.

- Safety kayaks

### **Working within a flotilla and awareness skills:**

Guides must have recognisable communication with the other raft guides on the trip.

And be aware of what raft is carrying what equipment and who is the trip leader.

They must also show experience in identifying potential hazards and in picking suitable rafting lines for different ability rafting crews.

Safety skills should be demonstrated in both preventing a situation arising and in dealing efficiently with any problems that arise. Sound



decision making skills should be in evidence along with good communication with other guides within the flotilla.

Candidates should be conversant with a range of rescue techniques and be able to demonstrate their efficient use in a variety of rescue incidents.

Examples would include:

- Flips
- Wraps
- Marooned crew member
- Multiple swimmers
- Stopper rescue

### **Personal skills:**

Candidates should show a competent level of personal rafting skills, to include

- Launching and landing
- Manoeuvring in rapids
- Ferry gliding
- Stopper surfing
- Use of oar rigs (if applicable)

Candidates should exhibit anticipation whilst running rapids and not just a reaction to events.

### **Environmental issues:**

Candidates would be expected to show an awareness of local environmental problems or conditions, e.g. access problems, SSSI's