

3 Star Surf - Assessor Notes

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

A.1 Lifting, carrying and launching

Candidates should illustrate practically their understanding of the safe and correct lifting and carrying techniques when carrying a boat on their own.

A.2 Control

Although clearly not in complete control the candidate should look relaxed with the basic concept of running along a wave and remaining upright when moving sideways, given the range of surf conditions likely this would include occasions when the paddler might capsize. As in all awards a capsize is not 'failure' in isolation but in the context of learning must hold a relevance to the skill being attempted.

A.3 Paddle out

In the conditions of the test a sophisticated strategy may not always be necessary. With this understanding the assessor should orchestrate opportunity for the candidates to show understanding of the key elements involved in a more demanding paddle out; speed, angle, wave judgment, trim and timing

A.4 Positioning and wave selection

Waves at this level do not always 'shoulder' or 'wall' it is however still a decision making process which can be examined closely by assessment strategies such as 3 *wave competitions* or paired work with the assessor to verbalise the candidate's thought process when judging the opportunity of catching a wave. Decisions NOT to catch a wave should be evident.

A.5 Take off

3 – 6 stroke paddle sequences should show powerful engagement of a full blade with a high top hand and strong pulling action on the blade. A clear understanding of 'short bursts of powerful strokes' should be observable, some directional error is acceptable

A.6 Riding

This process should focus on the understanding of below spray deck control and a good forward dynamic posture, allowing adjustments and development in the future based on an accurate 'shape' The use of the paddle should be kept to a minimum and the ruddering should not be the lead action, rather one of the components. An understanding of pushing rather than pulling to direct the craft should also be in evidence. A solid low brace position should be visible during the white water phase (hanging high-braces should not be accepted).

A.7 Turns

Turns should be initiated by a combination of forward body posture, positive rail control and forward 'pushing' strokes. Paddlers will be expected to attempt to turn the boat with similar consistency in both directions. Due to the size of face consistent with this award the turn will not always be successful and will suffer timing issues leading

to the stern of the boat engaging in the face of the wave and limiting the amount of turn completed, this stalling of the turn is a natural consequence of the learning stage. Candidates should display an understanding of the principles of future water in the rotation of not just the head but some degree of rotation of the shoulders. Edge and lean should be evident in appropriate contexts with broken water edging being the clear reference point for balanced sideways motion, and lean beginning to occur during faster turns. Although paddlers at this level should understand the importance of paddle independence they may not be able to demonstrate this in a completely consistent manner, and would need to revert to strokes on occasion to achieve the desired result i.e. putting weight on the back of the paddle in a low brace in broken water.

A.8 Ruddering

Candidates should have a basic understanding of the ruddering dynamic; displaying sweeping and placement strategies. This would be shown in turns at the bottom of the wave and S transitions. The posture of the upper torso in these situations should be maintained in a positive forward position, not allowing the drag of the paddle to bring the shoulders behind the hip line

A.9 Supporting

Candidates should show a good upright posture, elbows high and a dynamic hip action to allow the craft to travel sideways in both directions. This will normally be in a broken water situation. It should be evident that weight is predominately off the paddle blade unless a recovery action is being completed.

Part B – Rescue Skills

B.1 Capsize and return to shore

Candidates will, on capsize immediately move to the seaward side of the exited craft, maintain control of the paddle and control and monitor the hull in a safe manner until shallow water is reached. Safe handling skills will be shown in the possible situation of a fully swamped kayak high and dry on the sand.

B.2 Deep water rescue (Flat water)

In performing rescues the safe lifting techniques of 'in the box' lifts and 'sliding' should be evident, candidates should get assistance whenever possible including the use of the person in the water to assist in their own rescue. Candidates would be expected to be able to take part in all aspects of the rescue, without leading the procedure.

B.3 Capsize recovery

Candidates should show a number of techniques for righting a capsized craft, dependent on the depth of water. The ability to roll is of course key at 3 Star. However it is appreciated that this skill may be new, or have been learnt in a swimming pool and rarely done outside. Therefore helping candidates transfer this skill into an open water setting is important. They certainly do not have to be perfect. They can 'set up'

before the roll and multiple attempts are allowed. However in the end they do need to be able to roll, although they may not show consistency and versatility.

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

C.1 Personal risk management

Candidates should have an understanding of other water users but not be expected to lead groups in any way. They should be able to identify the difference between one foot and two foot waves, spilling, wind waves and shore breaks. The identification of river based and headland rips as well as taking into account the position of rocks and groynes when choosing a site in which to surf.

C.2 Awareness of others

Candidates should be able to look after themselves as part of a group led by a competent paddler. Their actions would not compound incidents and indeed their assistance could be of value to a leader, knowledge of the management issues facing the leader in a group situation could be verbally tested and illustrate their ability to take responsibility for those actions in moments of pressure. They should not be assessed in any decision making context.

Part D – Theory

D.1 Equipment

Candidates should be able to identify features in boat design which dictate their performance in general terms and hence be able to predict their effectiveness in the surf; these might include length, profile, shape of hull and edge profile. Questions on paddle length and personal clothing would also be appropriate.

D.3 Tides and bathymetry

An understanding of high and low, spring and neap tides and their impact on the selection of a venue. Candidates should be able to verbally outline the creation of swell in weather systems and understand where to access forecasts on the internet or in newspapers. They should be able to identify the bathymetry of a beach being used to include detail on beach profile, aspect and angle.

D.3 Etiquette

There should be an understanding of the drop in rule and other principles of etiquette when selecting a site not in conflict with the safety and interests of other water users.

D.4 Safety

Candidates should have a sound safety basis and knowledge of and ability to carry out basic risk assessments in order to keep themselves and their paddling partners safe.

D.5 Hypothermia/first aid

Linked with sound safe judgement candidates should be able to deal with the most likely injuries that may occur as part of paddlesport activities.

D.6 Environment

An appreciation of the environment we paddle in is a key underpinning principle for many in paddlesport. Being able to gain maximum enjoyment from this natural environment and how to protect it should be at the core of our behaviour.

This would particularly be relevant to water quality and rubbish on our beaches.

D.7 Planning and Group Awareness

Be a productive member of a paddling group. Know what questions to ask and how to go about organising a day out. Understand different roles within a group of paddlers on the water.

D.8 General

Be aware of the very diverse nature of paddlesport and the rich history that canoeing has within the UK and wider.