

Sea Kayaking Courses with Kayak Essentials

BCU 4 Star Sea Kayak Assessment Pre-course Assessment Notes

Overview

The BCU 4 Star Leader award is designed for those who wish to lead a group of 4 paddlers (not including themselves) 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.

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

BCU Guidelines

The current syllabus and guidance notes for the BCU 4 Star Sea Kayak Leader award are available on the BCU website. All candidates for the award should consult these notes, especially those relating to the aims of the award, pre-requisites and assessed skills.

Registration:

Candidates wishing to attend a BCU 4 Star assessment course with Kayak Essentials must first register their intentions with their National Governing Body. At the point of registration for assessment, the following prerequisites for assessment are required:

Leadership Training:	4 Star Leader Training within the last 3 years OR "old" level 3 sea kayak trainee status within the last 3 years
Relevant safety training:	BCU Coastal Navigation and Tidal Planning
First Aid award:	Recognised 8-hour First Aid certificate (including CPR) within last 3 years.
Registration Fee:	£10 for BCU Comprehensive members; £20 for others
Age:	16 years or older

You must register for the BCU 4 Star Leader assessment with your National Governing Body before booking a course with Kayak Essentials.

Booking:

Once registered, candidates can book place on an assessment course. Please provide the following:

- i. Completed Booking Form
- ii. Course Fee (see general guidelines)
- iii. Copy of registered LR Form

3 weeks prior to course date:

At this point we will establish course numbers, receive confirmed bookings and confirm dates.

We will also provide any specific pre-course information and/or tasks. For the BCU 4 Star sea kayak assessment, this will include a question paper, to be completed prior to the assessment.

We will also ask you to provide logged evidence of relevant pre-assessment experience, as outlined below:

Pre-assessment experience:

Please ensure that you have logged at least the minimum pre-assessment experience, as outlined in the relevant BCU notes for guidance:

Pre requisite Journeying

Candidates must have documented a minimum of:
10 days paddling on the open sea (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 include camping from a kayak

Please consult the relevant BCU guidelines at: www.bcu.org.uk/tests-and-awards
These documents provide full details of NGB assessment guidelines.

Assessment Programme:

These notes are guidelines to indicate the overall content of the assessment course. Specific timings may vary according to group size, venues and paddling conditions. It will be decided on the eve of the course whether the assessment team will camp out overnight between day one and day two; candidates will be advised accordingly. In any event, candidates should attend the assessment equipped for an overnight camp.

Day One:

0900 Meet at agreed venue: course introductions, prerequisites, administration, logistics, timings
0945 Planning session: trip planning for day one and day two
1030 Depart for agreed launch
1100 Afloat

Assessment activities on day one will include: personal paddling; leadership legs; incident management scenarios; navigation.

The paddling group will include the candidates and assessor(s): there will be no other paddlers to lead. Candidates will be asked to demonstrate self-rescue and rolling skills, in accordance with the award guidelines

Day Two:

0900 Meet at agreed venue

Leadership day: candidates will lead a group of up to 4 students (less experienced paddlers than the candidates; around 3 Star standard) on a suitable journey in qualifying conditions.

Each candidate can expect to be solely responsible for the group for around 2 hours on this day.

1530 Complete journey
1630 Course reviews and outcomes - 1:1 feedback with candidates
1730 Depart

Assessment format:

We will take a positive approach to allow candidates to perform to their full potential.

There will be frequent opportunities to discuss assessment tasks and check understanding.

The assessment will be broadly holistic, with final decisions made in the light of the candidate's overall performance across both days.

All candidates will receive written post-assessment feedback within one week of the course.