

# Sea Kayaking Courses with Kayak Essentials

## BCU 5 Star Sea Kayak Assessment Pre-course Assessment Notes

### Overview

The BCU 5 Star Leader award is designed for those who wish to lead in an advanced environment. Described in the BCU guidance notes as "Sea State 5", this includes: winds of Beaufort Force 5; associated sea state (moderate waves, many white caps); wave height up to 6 feet.

Assessment conditions may include: conditions described above; tidal conditions (tidal races associated with exposed UK coastlines; exposed rocky coastlines; launching and landing in moderate surf; candidates should come prepared to camp.

### BCU Guidelines

The current syllabus and guidance notes for the BCU 5 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 5 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:	5 Star Leader Training within the last 3 years ("old" 5 Star training is acceptable, as long as it took place within the last 3 years and included 3 full days training.
Relevant safety training:	BCU Open Water Navigation and Tidal Planning
First Aid award:	Recognised 16-hour First Aid certificate (including CPR) within last 3 years.
Registration Fee:	£10 for BCU Comprehensive members; £20 for others
Age:	18 years of age, or older

You must register for the BCU 5 Star Leader assessment with your National Governing Body before booking a course with Kayak Essentials.

### Booking:

Once registered, candidates can book a 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 5 Star sea kayak assessment, this will include a question paper and navigation exercise, to be completed prior to the assessment course.

At this point, we will ask you to provide logged evidence of relevant pre-assessment, as outlined below:

### Pre-assessment experience:

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

## Pre requisite Journeying

Candidates must have documented a minimum of:

24 days paddling on the open sea (during this time the candidate must have assumed the leader's role)

Two of the journeys must have taken place in different sea areas.

At least one multi-day journey must have involved an overnight camp.

These will also have involved a variety of different conditions including:

- Journeys of a minimum distance of 20 nautical miles in 4 Star conditions

- An open crossing of at least 5 nautical miles

- Navigation in poor visibility /darkness

- Onshore winds reaching at least force 4

- Exposure to no landing zones and difficult landings

- Tidal streams of at least 4 knots

- Tide races and overfalls

- Paddling in swell and waves

- Camping from a kayak

Please consult the relevant BCU guidelines at: [www.bcu.org.uk/tests-and-awards](http://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

1000 Planning session: trip planning for day one and day two

1100 Depart for agreed launch

1200 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

The paddling day will continue into the evening, to include a night navigation exercise.

The end of the first assessment day will be influenced by the time of darkness; around 2 hours are the minimum necessary for the night navigation exercise.

### 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 4 Star trainee 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.