

Nick Cunliffe - Kayak Essentials Leader Assessments 2022

Guidance for Candidates

Sea Kayak Leader - Moderate Water / Advanced Water

Advertised Assessment Dates

Nick is not advertising specific assessment dates in 2022 - we invite candidates to contact us, to agree possible assessment dates.

Overall 2022 Availability Guidelines

February / March	some available dates (Monday-Wednesday only)
April	limited availability (no weekends)
May / June / July / August	no availability
September / October	limited availability (no weekends)
November	some available dates (including weekends)

Assessment Format

We will follow British Canoeing guidelines for all sea kayak leader assessments. Please read the relevant BC advice for further information - links / downloads at our Kayak Essentials webpages:

www.kayakessentials.co.uk/bc-sea-kayak-leader-assessment/

www.kayakessentials.co.uk/bc-advanced-sea-kayak-leader-assessment/

Staffing

Nick will act as course director for all sea kayak leader assessments, and will often be the assessor. Nick will sometimes arrange other suitably-qualified staff for leader assessments.

Assessment Organisation

In 2022 assessment candidates will need to arrange their own group members to lead during assessment day(s). You should organise a group of 3-4 sea kayakers, all willing and able to be led in moderate / advanced conditions, according to the remit of each sea kayak leader award.

These group members can be people that you know - friends, club members, colleagues - and who are willing to be afloat for the duration of the assessment. We have included guidance for group members below.

All Nick's BC Sea Kayak Leader assessments will take place in Anglesey, North Wales.

Assessment Duration

Sea Kayak Leader (moderate water) assessments will require:

1 day (1-2 candidates)

2 days (3-4 candidates).

Sea Kayak Leader (advanced water) assessments will require:

2 days (1-4 candidates).

These assessment timescales are in line with the latest British canoeing guidelines (2021) for assessment ratio / duration.

Assessment Venue Planning

We will ask candidate(s) to select suitable kayaking venues on the Anglesey coastline, that meet their group members' needs and the leader award remit. We will discuss your planning, expected conditions and decision-making before agreeing a sea kayaking venue for the assessment day(s). If conditions are outside the award remit, or if group members are unable to paddle in suitable remit conditions, the assessment cannot proceed.

Assessment Tasks

We will follow British Canoeing assessment guidelines in organising assessment tasks. Please refer to the relevant British Canoeing documents, available as PDF downloads at our Kayak Essentials webpages:

www.kayakessentials.co.uk/bc-sea-kayak-leader-assessment/

www.kayakessentials.co.uk/bc-advanced-sea-kayak-leader-assessment/

British Canoeing Registration

To attend an assessment course, first register with British Canoeing – we can only confirm candidates who have completed this step. Further information is available on the British Canoeing website: <https://paddlesuptraining.com/courses/sea-kayak-leader-tidal/>

The following prerequisites for assessment are required:

- 24+ independent sea kayaking days in moderate UK sea conditions
Sea Kayak Leader - moderate water
- 30+ independent sea kayaking days in advanced UK sea conditions **
Sea Kayak Leader - advanced water
- BC Coastal / Open Water Navigation & Tidal Planning
- 16-hour (2 day) First Aid certificate (inc CPR) within last 3 years
- Safeguarding Training (BC online course may be suitable)
- British Canoeing Online Registration

Booking

Once registered with British Canoeing, candidates can book place on an assessment course – please send us your British Canoeing Registration Certificate at time of booking.

Record of Experience

At time of booking your assessment, please send us a summary of your relevant independent sea kayaking experience. We require this information before we can proceed with any practical assessment tasks.

What Next?

- Contact us for available dates (see KE assessment guidelines PDF download)
- Complete Assessment Registration with British Canoeing - send us the evidence
- Arrange your visit to Anglesey North Wales
- Organise a group of 3-4 padders, able to be led on sea kayak journey in suitable sea conditions for the award remit.
- Confirm these elements are in place – we will organise an assessment following British Canoeing guidelines.

Multiple Candidates

You are welcome to combine with other candidate(s), to complete your assessment on the same agreed dates. If you are not able to combine with other candidates, we will notify you if we are able to team up with other assessment candidates.

It is possible that assessments may be cancelled 48 hours prior to the agreed date, if conditions are unlikely to meet the British Canoeing award remit. In such cases, course fees will be refunded and alternative dates agreed.

Information for group members led by assessment candidates

Before the assessment date, we will need the following information:

- Name & contact telephone number
- Emergency contact details
- Any relevant medical information

Group members are welcome to share this information with candidates, and / or to email this information directly to Nick at: nick@kayakessentials.co.uk

Group members must be happy to paddle in moderate (or advanced) conditions, according to the award remit. Do please check everyone's suitability for joining the assessment group.

We will agree our chosen meeting point 24 hours before the assessment day.
Group members will need:

- Sea Kayak and related equipment
- Personal paddling clothing
- Food / refreshment for the day

We will ask some group members to take part in organised safety exercises, involving rescues in suitable conditions. Group members willing to take part in these exercises should dress appropriately - in most months of the year, a dry suit or wetsuit will be needed.

We will paddle in small groups of 5-6 paddlers, including candidates and assessors.
The assessors will have final responsibility for the safety all group members.

We will be afloat each day until about 4pm.

Assessment Approach

We aim to conduct positive, fair and well-organised Sea Kayak Leader assessments, that minimise any stress for candidates, and that offer extra learning opportunities.

With this in mind, we will aim to keep clear lines of communication at all times. We always encourage candidates to ask questions if anything is unclear before and during the assessment.

We believe that candidates have the best opportunity to demonstrate their skills and experience if the assessment is as close as possible to 'real world' situations. For this reason we ask candidates to arrange their own group members, and to be actively involved in choosing suitable sections of the Anglesey coastline on assessment days.

Our role as assessors is to observe, ask questions for clarification and - if necessary - to organise assessment tasks to establish a candidate's skills and knowledge. We recognise that assessments can be stressful, and we make every effort to be friendly, positive and approachable.

Assessment Outcomes

During the assessment we will ask questions, e.g. during planning sessions, following leadership legs, within navigation tasks. Our purpose is to better understand candidate decisions, to explore thought processes, and to establish knowledge in specific areas.

We will avoid leading or ambiguous questions, and will not seek to trip you up in any way. Questioning is simply an element of any assessment process. We aim to be clear and understandable in our briefings and communications: don't hesitate to ask us questions for clarification, to check understanding or for any other reason!

At the end of the assessment we will consider all information gained in the assessment and will compare with the syllabus of the British Canoeing sea kayak leader award. We will then share those conclusions with each candidate and will set aside time for a 1:1 review / discussion.

If a candidate does not reach the required standard of the award, we will provide specific examples of areas in which performance fell short, and will discuss an action plan to help prepare for a future successful assessment.

Written feedback of an unsuccessful result will be provided within one week of the assessment.

British Canoeing has an appeals / redress process, in the event that any candidate disagrees with the assessment outcome and is unable to reach a resolution with the assessment team. Details can be found at the British Canoeing website.

Course Feedback

British Canoeing is committed to developing the quality of its awards, and welcomes feedback from all course participants. You are invited to use the following link to comment on any aspects of our British Canoeing Leader assessment courses.

<https://goo.gl/forms/7pNoLr1N0J6oJRke2>

Summary

We want you to feel informed and supported in the assessment process for the British Canoeing sea kayak leader award. Do please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Nick Cunliffe