

4 Star Open Canoe Leader Syllabus

Aim

Successful performance at this level indicates that a candidate has the personal skill level and leadership ability required to lead a group of up to 4 solo canoe paddlers or 3 tandem canoe crews (not including themselves), on Moderate White Water and Moderate Inland Water. A successful candidate will be able to evaluate a group of paddlers to establish whether a particular trip is suitable to their level of performance or choose alternatives. The emphasis is on the application of a variety of techniques appropriate for moving water, and exposed open water, requiring the paddler to perform appropriate and effective manoeuvres in real situations.

The British Canoeing 4 Star Leader Award is a leadership award and not a coaching award.

Following assessment British Canoeing 4 Star Leaders must have in place civil liability insurance (included in comprehensive Home Nation membership), knowledge of Child Protection guidelines and good practice including checks where necessary and maintain evidence of currency.

Touring canoe paddlers may also be interested in the British Canoeing 4 Star Touring Leader Award.

Moderate Water Definition

Moderate White Water = Grade 2 white water or equivalent weirs.

Moderate Inland Water = Large areas of open water that exceed the sheltered water definition, that are no more than 500 metres off shore and in wind strengths that do not exceed Beaufort Force 4.

(Extracted from Terms of Reference)

Training and Assessment Courses

To achieve British Canoeing 4 Star Open Canoe Leader candidates are required to attend British Canoeing 4 Star Open Canoe Leader Training, this involves at least 2 days of formal training in personal skills and leadership. Some training courses also include the prerequisite British Canoeing White Water Safety and Rescue Training Course (extending the programme by an additional 2 days). Training is valid for 3 years, during this time, and upon completion of the assessment prerequisites, candidates can then put themselves forward for assessment. Assessments are normally run over 2 days.

Related British Canoeing Policies

See 'Reasonable Adjustments for Paddlesports Awards and Coaching' for details about how providers can make adjustments for paddlers with specific disabilities

See 'British Canoeing Appeals Procedure' for details of how candidates can go about making an appeal or complaint about the conduct of a British Canoeing Star Award

See 'APL Guidance Notes' for details of how to apply for accredited prior learning. APL is mainly used to allow individuals access to a British Canoeing qualification where they do not hold the specific prerequisite for that award, but have equitable prior learning

Useful Information

Please refer to the British Canoeing 4 Star Open Canoe Leader Training and Assessment Notes and the British Canoeing Star Award Guidance Notes for further information.

Training Prerequisites

British Canoeing 3 Star Open Canoe standard is the appropriate level of performance for paddlers to begin working towards the British Canoeing 4 Star Open Canoe Leader. It is not, however, necessary for the paddler to hold the British Canoeing 3 Star Open Canoe Award.

Assessment Prerequisites

- Home Nation British Canoeing 4 Star Open Canoe Leadership Registration (LR)
- Valid (within 3 years) British Canoeing recognised 2 day first aid award (if first aid training was completed prior to 31/12/11, a recognised 8 hour first aid course is acceptable)
- Previous experience: provide evidence of 12 trips (minimum 4 hours duration) that includes at least:
 - 3 different grade 2 river trips and 3 different open water journeys with winds up to Beaufort Force 4 (minimum 4 hours duration), as a member of a group
 - 3 different grade 1-2 river trips, and 3 different open water journeys with winds up to Beaufort Force 3, (minimum 4 hours duration), as an assistant leader
 - The above journeys should involve some overnight camps
- Valid (within 3 years) British Canoeing 4 Star Open Canoe Leader Training. This includes at least 2 days' logged experience of formal training in personal skills and leadership (see training notes). Whilst 2 days is seen as the minimum this would be for individuals with extensive prior experience and realistically 3, 4 or even 5 days may be more appropriate
- British Canoeing White Water Safety and Rescue Training Course (or Rescue 3 Whitewater Rescue Technician)

Candidates must be aged 16 or over at the time of assessment. Candidates under the age of 18 can take the award, but cannot be deemed responsible for leadership by law until they turn 18.

Craft

A traditional open canoe suitable for the remit of the award and the assessment tasks, paddled solo and tandem. Where the test is undertaken as part of a tandem crew then each paddler needs to demonstrate the ability to operate in both bow and stern. The candidate is expected to perform all paddle skills on both sides.

A candidate may take a tandem only route if their ability to paddle solo is impaired; see Reasonable Adjustments for Paddlesports Awards and Coaching for more information)

Equipment

Candidates should have personal and group equipment appropriate for the remit of the award and relevant to the assessment environment.

Trainer and Assessor

British Canoeing 4 Star Open Canoe Leader Provider.

Assessment Venue

The conditions for the assessment must include:

- Large areas of open water that exceed the sheltered water definition, that are no more than 500 metres off shore and in wind strengths that do not exceed Beaufort Force 4
- Grade 2 white water or equivalent weirs

Technical Syllabus

The candidate is required to perform all skills on both sides and both upstream and downstream as appropriate.

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills

- A.1 Lifting, carrying, launching and landing
- A.2 Efficient and effective open water skills:
 - Paddle effectively up, down and across a Beaufort Force 4 wind
 - Rafting
 - Sailing
- A.3 Efficient and effective grade 2 river running skills:
 - Upstream manoeuvres (ferries and S-turns)
 - Checking, setting and reverse ferry gliding
 - Eddy turns both into and out of the current
 - Supporting and edging
- A.4 Lining
- A.5 Poling
- A.6 Navigation

Part B – Rescue Skills

- B.1 Demonstrate skilful application of appropriate boat and bank-based safety and rescue skills in open water:
 - Open water self-rescue
 - Open water deep-water rescue
 - Open water swamped raft rescue
 - Open water man-over-board whilst sailing
 - Open water towing

- B.2 Demonstrate skilful application of appropriate boat and bank-based safety and rescue skills on moving water:
- Moving water self-rescue
 - Moving water throwline rescue
 - Moving water rescue of capsized paddler and equipment
- B.3 Incident management and first aid in the 4 Star environment
- B.4 Effective group leader and group member in rescues and incidents

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

- C.1 Skilful application of leadership principles (e.g. C.L.A.P.)
- C.2 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision-making
- C.3 Safety awareness and risk management
- C.4 Group control and management
- C.5 Equipment
- C.6 Structured evaluation of group's paddling abilities with regard to proposed trip

Part D – Theory

- D.1 Equipment
- D.2 Safety
- D.3 Weather
- D.4 Wellbeing, health and first aid
- D.5 Access
- D.6 Environment
- D.7 Planning
- D.8 Group awareness and management
- D.9 Navigation
- D.10 Etiquette
- D.11 General knowledge
- D.12 Leadership responsibilities
- D.13 Water features and hazards
- D.14 Injury prevention