

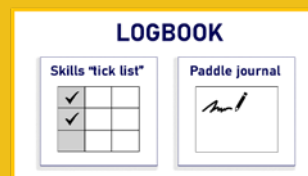
# Sea Kayak Skills Award Level 4

## Expectations:

I am an experienced confident paddler, capable of handling my kayak in L4 conditions. I have the necessary equipment. I can assess the sea/weather conditions and plan a trip safely according to the peer group's skills. I am a competent paddler capable of good decision making in L4 conditions. I can confidently kayak roll. I am competent in chartwork and in navigating over open crossings. I am competent in navigating in limited visibility (darkness/fog). I am able to reflect upon my own development as a paddler.

I understand the effects on the sea kayak of wind, wave, tide, and coastal features and can adapt a trip to suit these. I can summon outside rescue assistance. I have an understanding of my own and the group's effect on the environment and wildlife.

*Note:* Paddlers get issued with a Sea Kayak logbook L4/L5 AFTER doing the mandatory Level 4 training course (for which a L3 Certificate is a pre-requisite).



## Level 4 Conditions

**Coastal Features:** Coastal areas within 2 nautical miles of shore. Launching and landing from beaches with no greater than 1m broken waves. Navigating through and landing upon rocky shorelines in dynamic water.

<b>Wind:</b>	F0-5
<b>Sea State:</b>	Moderate (1.25 - 2.5m significant wave height)
<b>Surf:</b>	≤ 1.0m broken waves
<b>Flow:</b>	Overfalls, tidal streams and tide races ≥ 3knots
<b>Open Crossings:</b>	≤ 4 nautical miles (shore to shore)

## Modules and Skills



### SHORE BASED TRIP PLANNING

- Obtain and interpret a combination of marine based weather forecasts and synoptic charts. Apply this information to a nautical chart detailing how the weather forecast will affect various locations on the chart.
- Obtain and interpret tidal flow information. Apply this information to a chart detailing the effect these will have on the conditions on that day.
- Apply the 50/90 rule.
- Apply the Rule of Twelfths to identify the depth of water at a particular location and time.
- Use a cruising guide, guidebook, almanac or other reliable resources to ascertain the movement of tides at headlands/peninsulas. Apply this information to a chart to assist in the planning of a trip.
- Identify the likelihood of overfalls and tidal races from a chart.
- Plot a trip on a chart to include:
  - Start, finish points
  - Waypoints (identifiable from the water)
  - Escape/emergency egress points
  - Areas of respite
  - Areas where the potential for dynamic water is high
  - Areas of danger
  - Tidal flow
  - Magnetic bearings between waypoints
  - Distance between waypoints
  - Estimated time to paddle between waypoints

# Modules and Skills



## EQUIPMENT KNOWLEDGE

- Perform an equipment check as part of a peer group to ensure that all are safe to go to sea.
- Stow safety equipment in a manner such that it can be deployed effectively when/if necessary.
- Explain the use of the equipment a sea kayaker should carry to keep themselves safe on the sea when paddling in L4 conditions dealing with the following situations: **1.** Fix a broken boat, **2.** Provide alternate means of propulsion, **3.** Deal with hypothermia, **4.** Deal with an injury, **5.** Provide spare food and drink, **6.** Contact emergency services.



## BOAT-HANDLING SKILLS:

- **Kayak entry and exit, launching and landing:** Launch a sea kayak from a rocky shore using a towline and swim method. Land a sea kayak on a rocky shore using a towline and swim method.
- **Forward paddling:** Demonstrate and apply all-body paddling techniques for acceleration, long-distance paddling and stability.
- **Reverse paddling:** Steer a sea kayak while reversing between objects.
- **Stopping:** Can stop the kayak within 4 strokes and turn the sea kayak head-to conditions or tail-to conditions depending on what is appropriate in that moment.
- **Staying upright:** Demonstrate and maintain stability in sea kayak in a variety of different dynamic environments. Apply a high brace and sculling for support in a practical context.
- **Turning on the spot:** Pivot turn using the paddle on one side only.
- **Turning on the move:** Demonstrate and apply in a practical situation, a tight edging turn using combinations of forward momentum, edging/leaning, bow rudder, crossbow rudder and stern rudder. Use a back-face and power-face stern rudder to facilitate steering.
- **Moving sideways:** Demonstrate and apply a safe and effective method of making a sea kayak move sideways while stationary and while moving forward.



## PADDLING IN WIND

- Paddle a kayak into the wind demonstrating correct trim and paddle technique.
- Paddle a kayak across the wind applying a range of strategies to counteract weathercocking.
- Paddle a kayak downwind, catching waves and demonstrating effective steering to prevent broaching.



## PADDLING IN SURF

- Paddle a kayak across surf and perform a relevant support stroke to hold position sideways on a wave coming into shore
- Catch a breaking wave and hold a diagonal run.
- Bottom turn on a wave.
- Top turn on a broken wave
- Maintain stability exiting a wave.
- Paddle out back demonstrating timing and effective acceleration to punch through waves.
- Identify a rip and a cross-shore current.



## PADDLING ROCKY SHORES

- Demonstrate an ability to identify and read tidal water and to anticipate what is happening in terms of flow and eddies.
- Apply carving turns and pivot turns in the correct context while maneuvering around and between features in a moderate shoreline environment.



## Modules and Skills



### PADDLING ROCKY SHORES

- Use moderate hydraulics such as waves/surges/flows to assist movement between, through and over dynamic features on the shoreline.
- Maintain the **CLAP** principle with team-mates in a peer group throughout a shoreline experience:
  - **Communication:** Ability to share information without speaking.
  - **Line of sight:** Always being in visual contact with members of the group to enable communication.
  - **Avoidance:** Recognition and avoidance of common hazards at this level.
  - **Positioning:** For best effect to enhance self and group safety, communication, and line of sight.
- Employ a range of group management tactics to maintain the CLAP principle while engaging in activities in the shoreline environment.
- Demonstrate sound decision making in relation to the conditions, abilities of the team, likelihood, consequences and risks while participating in activities in the shoreline environment.



### PADDLING IN FLOW

- Break into a flow.
- Break out of a flow.
- Ferry-glide across a flow.
- Demonstrate a method of paddling as a team in a tidal flow which maintains the **CLAP** principle.
- Demonstrate effective swimming techniques to self-rescue in the flow.



### SELF-RESCUE AFTER CAPSIZE

- Demonstrate a roll on both sides; one side must be in a Level 4 environment.
- Demonstrate one of the following three self-rescue techniques in Level 4 conditions.
  - A cowboy rescue
  - A re-entry and roll.
  - Heel hook re-entry with paddle float
- Swim-tow a sea kayak 25 metres.
- Deploy the spare paddle from the deck of their own kayak while afloat.



### TEAM RESCUES

#### Assisted Rescue after capsizing:

- Complete an X-rescue of another paddler in Level 4 conditions
- Carry a swimmer a short distance using a bow and/or stern carry.
- Demonstrate a paddle presentation rescue – as a rescuer and as someone being rescued.
- Perform an incapacitated paddler ('unconscious paddler', 'hand of God') rescue in L4 conditions
- Recover an incapacitated swimmer into their kayak ('scoop rescue').

#### Towing:

- Perform a contact tow from a dynamic environment to a sheltered area.
- Perform a single point tow using a tow line for at least 200 metres.
- Perform a tandem tow for a single paddler and a small raft for 200m.
- Demonstrate accurate use of a throw rope to rescue a swimmer where/if applicable.



## SCENARIO MANAGEMENT

- Teamwork:
- Apply the **CLAP** principle while paddling with a group in a dynamic environment.
- Brief a group of peers on a trip using **DICET** or similar.
  - **Define**: The length, duration, nature of and waypoints of the trip leg.
  - **Identify**: Sections of the trip which may be challenging (hazards).
  - **Communication**: Have a system of communicating basic messages.
  - **Emergency/Exit**: Have a plan for an escape point if things go wrong. Agree how a capsize will be managed.
  - **Tactic**: How the group will move as a team while maintaining the CLAP principle.
- Apply **DICET** or similar during a trip to establish safe paddling between waypoints while on a trip.
- Demonstrate situation management to deal with a mock scenario which could happen while paddling with a peer group in a dynamic environment such as: Shoulder dislocation, head injury, sea sickness, sunstroke, hypothermia, unconscious paddler. Extricate the stricken paddler to a safe area and demonstrate effective skills as part of a team, to engage in ongoing care of the casualty until outside assistance is established.

### External Rescue:

- Demonstrate, in a mock scenario, a minimum of five methods of summoning outside assistance for rescue.



## NAVIGATING ON THE WATER

- Follow a compass bearing and time a leg of a journey (day and night).
- Explain 4 safety strategies for dealing with fog.
- Use transits to confirm a location on a chart.
- Generate an estimated position on a chart during a trip and give a latitude and longitude for that position.



## ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

- Discuss the ethical issues associated with the choice and purchase of kayaking equipment regarding the environment.
- Demonstrate good practice as part of a team in limiting their effect on the environment while sea kayaking – e.g. distance from animals, choice of areas to launch and land, proximity to nesting birds, awareness of fledging/seal pupping seasons.
- Identify, describe and discuss the characteristics of three aspects of wildlife they encounter on a sea kayaking trip.
- Have an understanding of and describe a simple marine food chain.





## Secondary Outcomes

- The paddler can make decisions for themselves in L4 conditions and can keep others in the team safe around them.
- The paddler is able to reflect on their practise.
- The paddler knows the pathway to Level 5.



## Craft, Training, Assessment and Certification

**Craft:** A sit-in sea kayak of adequate buoyancy, fitted with deck lines (perimeter lines) fore and aft, a minimum of two bulkheads, minimum of two hatches and a minimum length of 435cm/14'6". The hull shape must be conducive to edge-turning and pivot turns required at this level. Skogs and rudders are acceptable when used as appropriate.

**Training course entry requirements:** Level 3 Sea Kayak Skills certificate (mandatory requirement)

**Duration of training course (indicative guidelines):** Completion of L4 training is a mandatory requirement towards L4 certification. Paddler obtains a Canoeing Ireland L4/L5 Logbook before attending training. Recommended 14-21 hours contact time with a qualified instructor.

The sea kayaker is expected to put in significant and sufficient self-directed time between the training course and achievement of the award. Guideline: Likely minimum of 70 hours self-directed and/or directed training.

**Assessment:** Paddlers can choose a single one day assessment, or a progressive sign off of modules in their log book over time. Assessments do not have binary pass/fail outcomes, the instructor/s sign off the paddler's module/s where they have met the required standard, and provides feedback to the paddler on module/s where they are 'not there yet.'

Assessment must include a trip of at least 10km, and navigation in poor visibility or darkness. The paddler is required to be able to demonstrate all knowledge and skills from lower levels, and at a higher standard than that required for the preceding level.

**Certification:** When all the required L4 sections of their Logbook have been signed off by their instructor/s, the paddler asks the final instructor to apply for certification. Canoeing Ireland then award the Canoeing Ireland Sea Kayak L4 certificate to the paddler.