PORT OF PLYMOUTH CANOEING ASSOCIATION
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www.ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

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Centre

Risk Assessment: Training Sessions

RA Activity Details:	PPCA Scout Training Sessions	**RA Reference No:**	PPCA 005				**Date of RA:**	Mar 2024	
Area:	Coastline & Estuaries United Kingdom	**Pre-Control Risk Score:**	High				**RA Review Date:**	Mar 2025	
Guidance Documents Referenced:	(1) Canoe England Safety Guidelines for Paddlers, Clubs and Volunteers, PUK Coach and Leadership Prerequisites, (3) PPCA Club Operating Policy (4) Scouts Policy Organisation and Rules	**Post Control Risk Score:**	**Low**	Low	**Medium**		**High**		
RA Completed By:	Damean Miller	**Risk Change Controls Needed [YES or NO]:**			No				
RA Approved By:	Mark Perry	**Dynamic Risk Assessment Required (YES or NO)**			Yes				

This generic risk assessment covers training sessions predominantly within the local area of the club sheds at Mountbatten (including Plymouth Sound) but can also be applicable within UK waters and has been compiled to fulfil our insurance requirements and the moral obligation of the PPCA. The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify and manage the hazards and risks that may be incurred by all those participating in training sessions, be it student, coach or assistants, and to then examine what controls and management are necessary to reduce those risks and if necessary, and possible, identify any further actions that may be required by either the club or its members to reduce the risks as low as reasonably practicable.

It should be expected by those taking part in water sports of this nature that minor 'injuries', for example blisters, bumps and bruises, are 'normal' occurrences and do not constitute a 'significant' risk within the context of risk assessment. Consequently these factors do not form part of this written risk assessment. The following should be noted:

- All training sessions will be sanctioned by the Club Leader, PPCA Scout ASU Manager and the Session Leader (or his nominated representative) is duly authorized, qualified and experienced to conduct the training taking place.
- Appropriate safety equipment will be carried by the Leader in charge, Coaches and other designated 'helpers'. Session leaders are to be permit holder and first aid trained (& in-date) and carry an appropriate first aid kit.
- Training activities include: Intro courses, Taster Sessions, Paddle UK 'Development Pathway awards' (in kayak and canoe including white water sessions), Sit On Top craft, Stand Up Paddle boards and training sessions within swimming pools.

- Session leaders are to inspect craft, paddles and associated paddling equipment used by non-club members to ensure the equipment is in good order and suitable for the paddler.

- Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS, formerly known as Criminal Records Bureau, CRB) checks have been conducted on all Session leaders, coaches and 'helpers'. Session coaches will hold either PUKU accredited coaching qualification or Scout Activity Permits.

- Session Leaders and coaches may prevent anyone from paddling that they believe unfit to do so, or that they believe not of sufficient experience or skill to handle the conditions, or if to allow them onto the water may jeopardise the safety of themselves or others, or place unnecessary risks on others.

Prior to launching and starting a training session the Session Leader should conduct their 'dynamic risk assessment' and use this information to form part of his group briefing prior to getting on the water.

All accidents, incidents or near misses must be reported to the Club Leader and ASU Manager using the incident report form in the Club Operating Policy. Details of any incident which results in injury requiring hospital attendance / treatment will also be passed to Paddle UK for their records on sports injuries and to form a record for the insurance company in case of any resulting claim.

LIST ALL ACTIVITIES BEING UNDERTAKEN DURING THE TRIP	LIST ALL POTENTIAL HAZARDS IN COMPLETING THE ACTIVITY	PRE CONTROL MEASURES RISK SCORE (High, Medium, Low)			LIST ALL EXISTING PREVENTATIVE MEASURES & INCLUDE ALL NEW PREVENTATIVE MEASURES THAT HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED, THAT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED TO REDUCE THE RISK TO AS LOW AS REASONABLE PRACTICABLE	POST CONTROL MEASURES RISK SCORE (High, Medium, Low)			NAME PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTION OR ACTIVITY
ACTIVITY	HAZARD	H	M	L	CONTROL MEASURES	H	M	L	ACCOUNTABILITY
Moving club boats from/to the Mountbatten Storage sheds and the various launch locations eg slipways, pontoons, rocky beach, steps.	(1) Muscle strain/injury to the person(s) moving the kayak due to kayak weight/shape. This includes disabled persons, young persons and other beginners. (2) Collision with other members/members of the public/other users of Mountbatten club causing personal injuries. (3) Collision with vehicle/trailer causing personal injuries. (4) Personal injury due to kayaks/equipment toppling over within the sheds.		M		(1) Manual handling technique's taught from in the first club kayak lesson. Boats to be moved around by 2 people if required. Use of trolleys to move kayaks encouraged. Consideration of environmental conditions, e.g. wind whilst carrying kayaks. Adults/coaches/assistants to supervise young/vulnerable/disabled persons. (2) Young person's/beginners/disabled taught from the first club kayak lesson to be aware of their surroundings and other persons in the area. Adults/coaches to supervise young/vulnerable/disabled persons. (3) Members made aware of Gig club trailer movements and vehicles coming in and out of the courtyard area. Move boats and equipment out of the courtyard area as soon as practicable. Do not block access for other courtyard users. Adults/coaches/assistants to be aware of vehicle movement within the area and give verbal warnings of approaching vehicles. (4) Ensure securing straps are in place on boat trailer and vertical storage bays after use.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches, assistants, individual paddler
Kayak/Canoe training in or near estuaries	Contaminated water leading to illness / infection e.g. Leptospirosis		M		Scouting members advised to cover cuts and abrasions before the paddle. Session Leader, if required, discuss possibility of Weil's disease. Advice given to shower as soon as possible and to follow good personal hygiene before eating.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches, assistants, individual paddler

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	H	M	L	CONTROL MEASURES	H	M	L	ACCOUNTABILITY
Use of access 'bridge' (brow) and pontoon's to launch and recover kayaks, canoes etc.	(1) Difficulty of access/egress using the 'bridge' at low water due to steepness, especially for disabled people/wheelchair users. (2) Tripping on cleats or other objects on the pontoon leading to personal injuries including falling into the water, falling into craft moored alongside. (3) Accidently falling off the pontoon into the water leading to possible drowning. (4) Intentionally jumping from the pontoon into the water causing personal injuries due to shallow water. (5) Personal injuries from wood splinters on the pontoon, both hands and feet. (6) Risk of disease to individuals eg leptospirosis, bird faeces. (7) Fire on craft moored alongside due to fuel storage leading to personal injuries/death. (8) Access/egress during inclement weather including snow, sleet, rain, winds, and darkness.		M		(1) Familiarisation briefing to scouts to include discussing use of the bridge at low water and highlight that vulnerable users must seek assistance before crossing to the pontoon. Responsibility lies with the coach/helpers to ensure they carry out dynamic risk assessment as to the angle of the bridge. (2) Familiarisation visit to the pontoon, led by the coach/designated helper, to point out trip hazards, both static (cleats) and 'occasional' (mooring lines). Point out various vertical ladders fitted to the side of the pontoon to aid climbing out of the water. Mountbatten can be used as an example. (3) All PPCA members, scouts and visitors must wear a buoyancy aid whilst on a pontoon. Coaches/helpers must point out that 'horseplay' is not allowed on pontoons, adequate footwear must be worn and no running on the pontoon. (4) Scouts/visitors to be instructed that all injuries, including minor incidents such as splinters, must be reported to the club/helpers. (5) Scouts/visitors must be reminded during safety briefs that cuts/open wounds must be covered with a suitable dressing before engaging in water based activities. (6) PPCA club members/Scouts/visitors made aware in the event of a fire the person discovering the fire must raise the alarm (shouting fire, fire fire). Personnel must evacuate the pontoon by the safest means possible (this may include jumping into water and swimming to shore or escaping via canoe/kayak/ other craft). If safe to do so, all personnel should muster near the club shed (or other designated area) for a head count by the coach/helpers. Ensure the Emergency Services have been called dialling 999. (7) Students on taster sessions and Discover courses would not be expected to encounter these conditions whilst undertaking training. Coaches/assistants/helpers must always be aware of the changing weather conditions and be constantly conducting their own dynamic risk assessment. Training must be curtailed and students brought back to the club shed before conditions deteriorate. Pontoons are traditionally illuminated during hours of darkness but the coach/assistants must not overly rely on this illumination. Students on explore courses and above may still use a pontoon in inclement weather as part of their training syllabus and to gain experience, this should be closely monitored by the coach.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches, assistants, individual paddler

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	H	M	L	CONTROL MEASURES	H	M	L	ACCOUNTABILITY
Use of slipways to launch and recover kayaks, canoes etc.	(1) Muscle strain/injury to the person(s) moving the kayak due to kayak weight/shape. (2) Slips, trips and falls on the slipway due to 'fixed' items on the slipway (cleats) or environmental conditions (algae) leading to personal injuries. (3) Falling off the side or 'end' of the slipway leading to personal injuries including drowning. (4) Unexpected wave action onto the slipway causing canoes/kayaks to collide with people causing personal injuries. (5) Craft colliding with other personnel particularly		M		(1) Familiarisation briefing to students/visitors to include discussing use of the pontoon, at all tide states, and highlight that vulnerable users must seek assistance before using the slipway. Brief to include correct movement of craft to/from the slipway. (2) Familiarisation visit to the slipway, led by the coach/designated helper, to point out trip hazards, both static (cleats) and 'occasional' (algae, debris, other craft/users). The 2 slipways at Mountbatten can be used as examples. (3) All students must wear a buoyancy aid whilst using the slipway to launch & recover. Scouts and Cubs must wear helmets when paddling with the club. Familiarisation brief to include vertical edges to the side and end of slipways. Where possible when launching and recovering use the central area of the slipway. (4) Familiarisation brief to warn students that passing craft can cause waves to hit the slipway therefore all students to clear the slipway as soon as possible. Coaches/assistants are responsible for monitoring the launch/recovery activity and give sufficient warning should waves be seen coming in. (5) Students must be taught to launch/recover to the slipway when it is clear there is room for them to do so. Students are taught to move their kayak/canoe & paddle(s) to a safe area of the slipway as soon as possible before returning to assist other students if required. Coaches/assistants must control the number of people/craft on the slipway to ensure it does not get over crowded. Coaches/assistants must also monitor the wave action coming onto the slipway and ensure this water is within acceptable limits for the group's capability. (6) Students on taster sessions/Discover courses would not be expected to encounter rough wave conditions whilst using a slipway to launch or recover, other sheltered areas must be used. Coaches/assistants/helpers must always be aware of the changing weather conditions and be constantly conducting their own dynamic risk assessment. It is unlikely that slipways are illuminated during hours of darkness therefor coaches/assistants may need to consider other areas in which to launch/recover. Students on 2* courses and above may still use slipways in inclement weather as part of their training syllabus and to gain experience, this should be closely monitored by the coach.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches, assistants, individual paddler

ACTIVITY	**HAZARD**	**H**	**M**	**L**	**CONTROL MEASURES**	**H**	**M**	**L**	**ACCOUNTABILITY**
Use of beaches and steps to launch or recover kayaks, canoes etc.	(1) Slips, trips and falls due to uneven surfaces, unstable rocks, kelp/seaweed, and algae on rocks or foreign objects causing personal injuries. (2) Moving the canoe/kayak from the beach to 'hard standing' eg crossing railings, lifting/lowering craft. (3) Accessing/egressing the canoe/kayak whilst the craft may be unstable eg perched on rocks, leading to falls/capsizing/personal injury. (4) Capsize whilst launching/recovering craft due to unbalancing, wave action, collision with other craft/paddler. (5) Launching/landing in surf conditions leading to capsize and possible personal injuries due to contact with seabed/beach.		M		(1) As trainees progress they are introduced to beach (& steps) launching & recovery and methods used to reduce the risk of falling eg identifying a clear route, recognising 'green slippery algae' and avoiding stepping onto it. (2) Some beaches are surrounded by edge protection railings or walls which will require careful handling of students and kayaks. Coaches/assistants are required to supervise this activity and ensure students are capable of the task before allowing the activity to continue. (3) Accessing and egressing a canoe/kayak is part of the training syllabus regardless of what course is being undertaken. This training is to be supervised by a coach/assistant who is trained to assist in such situations. (4) Capsizing whilst launching and recovering is an expected occurrence whilst canoeing/kayaking and all coaches/assistants are trained in how to assist someone who has capsized. (5) Coaches/assistants will regularly conduct visual checks of fitted spray decks to ensure the 'release handle' is in the correct position. (6) Scouts and Cubs must wear helmets when paddling with the club. If 'surf training' is taking place all paddlers must wear a helmet. If unexpected surf is encountered all adult paddlers must be strongly advised that helmets should be worn. Session Leader to assess surf conditions & the group's ability. If necessary seek more sheltered launching/landing point.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches/assistants/individual paddler
Kayak/Canoe training – Playing games	(1) Capsizing due to drifting into hazards eg pontoons, moored craft etc leading to personal injuries (shallow water) or drowning.		M		(1) Coach/Session leaders should keep proper control over games in progress. They should consider the location of the game and associated risks of shallow water. They must be aware of the tidal flow and where the group are being pushed, eg drifting into hazards, pontoons and moored craft etc. (2) Members involved in the games need to be instructed as to the risks of 'aggressive' play, Coaches/helpers must curb any overly aggressive behaviour of any paddler. (3) All Scouts, PPCA members under 18, and all students under instruction, must wear correct safety equipment, eg buoyancy aids whilst on the water. (4) Scouts and Cubs must wear helmets when paddling with the club.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches/assistants

ACTIVITY	**HAZARD**	**H**	**M**	**L**	**CONTROL MEASURES**	**H**	**M**	**L**	**ACCOUNTABILITY**
Use of 'obstacles' to launch or recover kayaks, canoes etc, eg hanging vehicle tyres	(1) Slips, trips and falls due to uneven surfaces, unstable objects, kelp/seaweed, and algae on rocks or foreign objects causing personal injuries. (2) Moving the canoe/kayak from/to the Obstacle may involve lifting/lowering craft which could cause muscle strain or personal injuries. (3) Accessing/egressing the canoe/kayak whilst the craft may be unstable eg wave action, leading to falls/capsizing/personal injury. (4) Capsize whilst launching/recovering craft due to unbalancing, wave action, collision with other craft/paddler.		M		(1) As trainees progress they are introduced launching & recovery from 'obstacles' an example is the vehicle tyres hanging from the walls at the Mount batten Centre. Students are taught methods used to reduce the risk of falling eg working in pairs for added security, recognising 'green slippery algae' and avoiding stepping onto it. (2) Some access/egress points are surrounded by edge protection railings or walls which will require careful handling of students and kayaks. Coaches/assistants are required to supervise this activity and ensure students are capable of the task before allowing the activity to continue. (3) Accessing and egressing a canoe/kayak whilst on the water is part of the training syllabus regardless of what course is being undertaken. This training is to be supervised by a coach/assistant who is trained to assist in such situations. (4) Capsizing whilst launching and recovering is an expected occurrence whilst canoeing/kayaking and all coaches/assistants are trained in how to assist someone who has capsized. (5) Coaches/assistants will regularly conduct visual checks of fitted spray decks to ensure the 'grab handle' is in the correct position. (6) Scouts and Cubs must wear helmets when paddling with the club.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches/assistants
Kayak/Canoe training (general)	Environmental conditions leading to hypothermia, hyperthermia and other personal injuries.	H			(1) All students/paddlers encouraged to disclose any pre-existing illnesses/medical conditions. (2) All paddlers to be wearing clothing suitable for the anticipated weather conditions/water temperature. (3) Session Leader/coaches to monitor environmental conditions during the paddle (4) Paddlers to bring their own sunscreen and water bottle. Coaches will reiterate this at the briefing. (5) Paddlers undertaking Explorer training are briefed to bring food, drink and spare clothing for the training (if required). (6) All paddlers will have completed Discover training as a minimum before being allowed to progress to more advanced training/paddling trips. (7) Session Leader/coaches are first aid trained and first aid equipment is carried within the group.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches/assistants

ACTIVITY	**HAZARD**	**H**	**M**	**L**	**CONTROL MEASURES**	**H**	**M**	**L**	**ACCOUNTABILITY**
Kayak/Canoe training Wet Drills	Wet Drills leading to cold immersion, hypothermia, drowning or personal injuries.	H			(1) Coaches/Session Leaders to ensure that environmental conditions eg water temperature, is sufficiently 'warm' for wet drills to be undertaken. (2) Buoyancy aids must be worn and be of suitable size. Canoe/ kayak will be suitable for the paddler & in good condition. Spray deck is the right size for the kayak, spray deck release handle in good condition. Paddlers are wearing adequate clothing for wet drills. (3) Wet drills for Discover /introduction courses will take place within the confines of the Mountbatten Pontoon until such time students are deemed capable of moving to adjacent areas. Paddlers on Explorer courses, wet drills can be undertaken at locations deemed safe by the coach. (4) Where practical, within the syllabus, wet drill should be undertaken at the end of the training session close to shore based locations so students can use hot showers/facilities to rewarm. (5) Session Leader, coaches / helpers appropriately qualified, experienced, first aid trained and 1st aid kit available. Rescue plans (including escape routes) made and discussed amongst Session Leader / coaches. (7) If a paddler is displaying symptoms of hypothermia the paddler should be treated as a casualty. If possible apply dry clothes/hat/gloves etc., use tow lines to get the casualty ashore. (7) If necessary make a 'Mayday' or 'Pan Pan' VHF call for assistance.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches/assistants
Kayak training – Swimming Pool	Specific hazards within the confines of a swimming pool include the following hazards: (1) Slips, trips and falls (2) Drowning (3) Entrapment (4) Head injuries (5) Upper body injuries due to lifting/carrying kayak		M		(1) Member's reminded no running within the pool area. (2) Members should be comfortable in a water environment. BA's are not a requirement, can be worn if required. Paddlers to be able to exit a capsized kayak, & should be a 'helper' within the vicinity. Swimming pools should have a lifeguard on duty during a pool session. (3) Members should be able to swim without a buoyancy aid and able to exit a kayak upside down. If a member can't roll or prevent a capsize then there will be one to one ratio or one to two ratio with a 'helper'/coach. (4) All cuts and abrasions must be covered with a suitable waterproof dressing. (5) Helmets must be worn by all those on or in the water, eg in a kayak or coaches. No rolling in shallow water or near the side of the pool. (6) Members are instructed by coaches to lift loads safely and work within their lifting limit. If a capsized kayak is full of water then two members will be required to empty the kayak safely			L	Leader in charge, Coaches/assistants

ACTIVITY	**HAZARD**	**H**	**M**	**L**	**CONTROL MEASURES**	**H**	**M**	**L**	**ACCOUNTABILITY**
Kayak/canoe training (General)	Collision with shipping or other craft leading to personal injury/death.	H			(1) Coaches must identify hazardous areas such as shipping lanes, port/harbour entrances. (2) If possible the group should keep close to the shore and conduct training away from other water users/hazardous areas. (3) Cross shipping lanes by the shortest and route. (4) Coaches should observe any yacht/dinghy racing and not cause an obstruction, particularly with student paddlers. (5) Coaches are to be aware of designated bathing areas and transit slowly keeping a watch for swimmers. (6) Avoid paddling into areas designated as "Water Skiing" or high speed craft, e.g. jet skis. (7) Coaches to have a knowledge of the Collision Regulations.			L	Coaches/assistants
Kayak/canoe training (General)	Paddling in darkness (both planned/unplanned) possible collision with static objects/shipping leading to capsize/personal injuries/death.	H			(1) Coaches must aim to have all students under tuition within a safe area, eg the confines of Mount Batten pontoon, before darkness comes in. (2) Paddlers are required to carry white lights/head torches/cylumes (light sticks). (3) Paddlers without lights placed centre of the group. (4) If possible the group should paddle close inshore to avoid the possibility of collision with larger craft/shipping. (5) If shipping lanes need to be crossed this should be at right angles, by the shortest (but safest) route and the group should move as quickly as possible.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches/assistants
Kayak/canoe (General)	Paddling in restricted visibility e.g. fog, torrential rain leading to lost paddler(s), collision with other vessels/capsize/ personal injuries/death.	H			(1) Coaches should understand the weather forecast for their training period and anticipate restricted visibility and plan accordingly taking into consideration the group's ability, particularly students under tuition. (2) If visibility becomes restricted Coaches to get all paddlers into a tight group, buddy up, and conduct a headcount. (3) Use local knowledge/compass to get a bearing to nearest safe coastline. (4) In fog the group should paddle to shallow water/coastline to reduce risk of collision with other vessels. (5) In fog the group should remain quiet and listen for other water borne craft. If risk of collision is imminent use whistles to indicate position. (6) In the event of a collision and injuries are sustained a 'Mayday' or 'Pan Pan' VHF call should be made seeking assistance.			L	Leader in charge, Coaches/assistants

Dynamic Risk Assessment

The dynamic risk assessment is the final link in this risk assessment process, it takes place within circumstances that are unforeseeable and / or are changing constantly (e.g. a white water river). It is this final assessment which we rely upon to allow us to carry on our paddling activities safely, and to make carefully considered judgments. The dynamic approach is a continuous thought process.

Prior to launching and conducting a training session, gather information, evaluate situations and then apply your judgment to decide the most appropriate course of action. Hazards must be identified continuously and the risk to all concerned considered throughout the training session.

Front Cover PPCA 'Training' Dynamic Risk Assessment

PPCA 'Training' **Dynamic Risk Assessment Aide Memoire**
Only discuss the pertinent & relevant points (**or use question & answer technique, involve the group!**)
1. Everyone signed the session register / headcount. 2. Any personal health issues? 3. Weather? Temperature (including water)? Tide times? Sunset? 4. Warm up / Stretch / Everyone correctly dressed? Food? Drink? Survival bags? 5. Safety kit carried e.g. 1st aid kit? Tow lines? Mobile phone / Comms? Survival bags? 6. Actions on capsize? 7. Actions on injuries? 8. Actions on crossing shipping lanes/other craft etc? 9. Brief outline on training session, any questions? 10. Any Questions?

Rear Cover PPCA 'Training' Dynamic Risk Assessment

PPCA 'Training' **Dynamic Risk Assessment Aide Memoire**
PPCA
For use by all Session Leaders, Coaches & Helpers on PPCA training sessions.