PORT OF PLYMOUTH CANOE ASSOCIATION
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Devon, United Kingdom
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Risk Assessment: Training Sessions

RA Activity Details:	PPCA Training Sessions	**RA Reference No:**	PPCA 002			**Date of RA:**	Feb 2024		
Area:	Coastline & Estuaries United Kingdom	**Pre-Control Risk Score:**	High			**RA Review Date:**	Feb 2025		
Guidance Documents Referenced:	(1) Canoe England Safety Guidelines for Paddlers, Clubs and Volunteers, PUK Coach and Leadership Prerequisites, (3) PPCA Club Operating Policy	**Post Control Risk Score:**	**Low☛**	Low	**Medium☛**		**High☛**		
RA Review 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 and the Session Leader (or ~~his~~ their nominated representative) is duly authorized, qualified and experienced to conduct the training taking place.
- Appropriate safety equipment will be carried by the Session Leader, Coaches and other designated 'helpers'. Session leaders are to be first aid trained (& in-date) and carry an appropriate first aid kit.
- Training activities include: ~~Start~~ Intro courses or Taster Sessions, Paddle UK ~~'Star awards'~~Paddle Awards & Personal Performance 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 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~~ Safety Officer using the PPCA I~~n~~cident R~~r~~eport F~~f~~orm~~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.

Commented [AC1]: Link to form

Commented [AC2]: There is a lot of overlap between this RA and that for sea kayaking and use of Mountbatten. This could be avoided by cross-referencing to make the RAs shorter! Examples include nightime, moving boats, slips. So those reading the Training RA, for example, are required to read the MB and Sea Kayaking ones too.

STATE 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~~Everybody 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	Coaches, assistants, individual paddler

Kayak/Canoe training in or near estuaries	Contaminated water leading to illness / infection e.g. Leptospirosis		M		Students/club 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. Consideration should be given to outfalls and tidal states, especially if training is planned that involves entering the water			L	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 students/visitors 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, students 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) Students/visitors to be instructed that all injuries, including minor incidents such as splinters, must be reported to the club/helpers. (5) Students/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/Students/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 Start and Discover sessions/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	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~~slip, 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~~ paddlers must wear a helmet and buoyancy aid whilst using the slipway to launch & recover. 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~~overcrowded. 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 ~~Start~~ Intro and Discover sessions/courses would not be expected to encounter rough wave conditions whilst using a slipway to launch or recover, so 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 therefore coaches/assistants may need to consider other areas in which to launch/recover. Students on Explore 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	Coaches, assistants, individual paddler

Commented [AC3]: Leaders/helpers should set example to students. We need a more consistent message on this - we either do or we don't wear helmets to launch and recover boats on the slip, OR we make it at the Leader/Coach's discretion and state so.

Commented [AC4]: Activity in the hours of darkness is not planned and so this can be removed.

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' e.g. crossing railings, lifting/lowering craft. (3) Accessing/egressing the canoe/kayak whilst the craft may be unstable e.g. 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 e.g. 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) Under 18's 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	Coaches/assistants/individual paddler
Kayak/Canoe training – Playing games	(1) Capsizing due to drifting into hazards e.g. 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, e.g. 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 PPCA members under 18, and all students under instruction, must wear correct safety equipment, e.g. buoyancy aids & helmets whilst on the water.			L	Coaches/assistants

Commented [AC5]: Can we stick to either "students" or "trainees" for consistency?

Commented [AC6]: . I see no reason why under 18s should be required to wear helmets at all times? Helmets should be worn for rock gardening, surfing or any other situation where head contact with hard objects may occur. This might include landing and launching from a slippery concrete slip.

Commented [AC7]: Helmets again. What are we actually wanting to do here?

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	H	M	L	CONTROL MEASURES	H	M	L	ACCOUNTABILITY
Use of 'obstacles' to launch or recover kayaks, canoes etc, e.g. 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~~ 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 e.g. 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 to launching & recovery from 'obstacles' ~~an~~ for 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 e.g. 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) Under 18's/students must wear helmets when paddling with the club.			L	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. Under 18's must have a disclosure form signed by a parent/guardian. (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 ~~Explore and Specific award~~ training are briefed to bring food, drink and spare clothing for the training (if required). (6) All paddlers will have completed Intro~~1~~* or Discover training as a minimum before being allowed to progress to more advanced training/paddling trips. Progress to be logged on the PPCA Passport (7) Session Leader/coaches are first aid trained and first aid equipment is carried within the group.			L	Coaches/assistants

Commented [AC8]: Helmets again!

Commented [AC9]: I've never seen one of those. Do they still exist an are they used? Do they require re-instating?

Commented [AC10]: Link

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 e.g. water temperature, is sufficiently 'warm' for wet drills to be undertaken. (2) Suitable ~~B~~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 ~~Start~~ Intro and Discover courses will take place within the confines of the Mountbatten Pontoon until such time students are deemed capable of moving to adjacent areas. For p~~P~~addlers on ~~Explore or skill specific~~other award 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 change into warm dry clothes shortly after.~~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	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~~	~~Coaches/assistants~~

Commented [AC11]: Consider taking any appropriate points from this and incorporating into pool specific risk assessment

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	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	Coaches/assistants

Commented [AC12]: See sea kayaking RA

Commented [AC13]: See sea kayaking RA

Commented [AC14]: See sea kayaking RA

Dynamic Risk Assessment

The dynamic risk assessment is the final link in this risk assessment process, and it takes place within circumstances that are unforeseeable and / or are changing constantly (e.g. ~~a white water river~~the sea). 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.

Commented [AC15]: See my previous comments regarding Dynamic Risk Assessment in sea Kayaking RA

Front Cover PPCA 'Training' Dynamic Risk Assessment **Rear 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?

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