

5 Star Open Canoe - Assessor Notes

Refer also to cover syllabus and training notes

Prerequisites - note

A quality, advanced open canoe day will be one of either open water with a large fetch in windy conditions or rivers with good grade 3 sections and of all volumes and gradients. Such experience should show a strong bias towards 'wilderness journeys' of anything from a day trip to a multi day expedition.

Part A – Personal Paddling Skills.

Show a high level of ability and understanding of the strokes and techniques necessary to handle a canoe, both on white water and on exposed open water. Emphasis should be on effective and efficient techniques which underpin a smooth, controlled and consistent performance and not the reliance on strength.

A.1 Grade 3 river running skills

- On grade 3 moving water, demonstrate a solid performance of all the 4 Star moving water skills, with anticipation and control.
- Descend technical rapids using controlled, effective manoeuvres.
- Use lines as appropriate when descending technical rapids
- Demonstrate paddling a loaded canoe in grade 3 water

A.2 Open water skills (wind up to force 5)

- Demonstrate the ability to manoeuvre and control a canoe in a variety of wind & wave conditions, including being able to launch into and negotiate waves created by wind up to force 5 over a large fetch.
- Demonstrate paddling a loaded canoe in exposed open water conditions.
- Construct improvised sailing rigs to allow the group to journey on open water. Safely manage the group on the water.

A.3 Lining.

Demonstrate varied strategies for travelling up and downstream on a river and up wind on an exposed shoreline.

A.4 Poling.

Demonstrate varied strategies for travelling up and downstream on a river and up wind on an exposed shoreline.

A.5 Navigation.

Demonstrate an ability to navigate on open water in adverse conditions. (In fair weather conditions this may be assessed at night).

Part B – Rescue Skills

- B.1 Demonstrate skilful application of appropriate boat and bank-based safety and rescue skills, including self rescue.
- B.2 Incident management and first aid in the 5 star environment, including setting up a 3:1 haul system (it is not necessary to pin a boat to assess this).
- B.3 Effective team leader and team member in rescue / incidents
Deal with a range of rescue scenarios (both as leader and group member) requiring a range of rescue techniques. This should include the safe retrieval of any equipment which may have been lost as a result of an incident.

Part C – Safety, Leadership & Group Skills

- C.1 Skilful application of leadership (e.g. CLAP) principles
- C.2 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision-making
- C.3 Safety awareness and risk management
- C.4 Group control and management
 - Demonstrate an organised approach both on and off the water.
 - Demonstrate good judgement when effectively and safely leading groups on class 3 water as well as on open water both during the day and at night.
 - Identify hazards and evaluate suitable lines for different designs of craft e.g. white water and touring boats.
 - Use an effective communication system and the maintain line of sight.
- C.5 Equipment.
 - The candidate should present themselves for evaluation with suitable personal equipment, plus any additional equipment deemed to be appropriate to support a group in their charge.
 - Any such equipment should reflect such things as the season, the ability of their companions and the difficulty of the waters to be paddled.
 - Borrowed equipment will be assessed as if it were the candidate's own. On the level of water being paddled at 5 star, having too much equipment can be nearly as hazardous as having too little.

Part D – Theory

Questions may be asked on any of these subject areas and a good depth of knowledge is expected:

- D.1 Equipment
- D.2 Safety
- D.3 Weather
- D.4 Hypothermia/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
- D.12 Leadership responsibilities
- D.13 Water features / hazards

