



avon outdoor activities club

## Canoeing RA CAN1 Generic Risk Assessment

		<b>To be read in conjunction with Risk Assessments RA CAN2 – RA CAN6 and applicable kit lists for the intended canoeing environment and activity</b>
<b>Generic Risks</b>	<b>Who may be affected</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <p>a) Insufficient experience, training and exceeding safe Leader / Coach ratios.</p> <p>➤ Accidents/injuries</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>➤ Leaders / coaches must have sufficient personal and leadership skills appropriate to risk level of intended activity.</p> <p>➤ Recommended maximum ratios Leaders / Coach to participants for events, journeys and coaching:</p> <p>Grade I or shelter waters including = 1:8 of unassisted leader / coach to non peer participants.</p> <p>Grade II or open areas of large lakes = 1:8 + competent assistant leader.</p> <p>Grade III-V, open water, sea and surf = 1:6 + one or more competent assistant leader(s) as appropriate.</p> <p>➤ BCU Coaches to hold minimum 4 hour first aid certificate.</p> <p>➤ System of communication is established for use on any water.</p>

<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>a) Insufficient RA and planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Accidents/injuries</li> <li>➤ Property damage</li> </ul>	<p>All</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Generic and specific environment/activity risk assessments will be read by Leaders and Coaches and any additional specific potential hazards that can be identified will be recorded on the RA form.</li> <li>➤ The following will be considered for event planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Leader/Coach experience;</li> <li>b) Leader/Coach ratios;</li> <li>c) Participants age, any disabilities/health concerns, current experience, ability to cope with intended activity level of difficulty;</li> <li>d) Expected and actual weather (obtain forecast) and water conditions, day length;</li> <li>e) Trip distance, progression and duration;</li> <li>f) Gather info, consult river guides, LAO, sea charts, maps;</li> <li>g) Lesson plans/program, objective of activity;</li> <li>h) Required equipment, food, water;</li> <li>i) Escape routes, abort points, intended access and egress;</li> <li>j) Issue event joining instructions and other relevant info to participants;</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The activity will be postponed, aborted or adjusted if circumstances or conditions become unsuitable and fall outside acceptable safety parameters.</p>
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<p><b>Equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Equipment Failure</li> <li>➤ Inadequacy</li> <li>➤ Manual Handling</li> <li>➤ Loss of loads</li> </ul>	<p>All</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All AOAC provided equipment has a six monthly safety inspection.</li> <li>➤ All participants (or personal hires) must check issued AOAC equipment prior to use and report any defects to the Leader/Coach or Equipment officer.</li> <li>➤ The Leader/Coach will not permit a person to participate in an AOAC event if he/she considers that the person's equipment is defective or inadequate for the intended activity.</li> <li>➤ Participants must use safe manual handling techniques to move canoes, in particular participants will be briefed how to load and unload from AOAC trailer.</li> <li>➤ When loading/unloading AOAC equipment at the store after dark, two people must be present.</li> <li>➤ Canoes (maximum of 8 kayaks) will be secured to AOAC trailer with straps or ropes in addition to the bungies.</li> <li>➤ Drivers are responsible for checking that their loads are secure not the Leader/Coach.</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>
<p><b>Death and Drowning</b></p> <p>a) Entrapment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Natural or manmade object.</li> <li>➤ Trapped in upturned canoe.</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Training / ability to identify and avoid entrapment locations.</li> <li>➤ Canoe as group with suitable rescue equipment and to provide mutual rescue cover or to summon external rescue assistance if required.</li> <li>➤ All participants to wear correctly fitted and sized buoyancy aid (PFD).</li> <li>➤ Canoes fitted with sufficient integral buoyancy and additional air bags as required.</li> </ul>
<p>b) Unconscious under water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Head injury</li> <li>➤ Medical condition</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All participants to wear correctly fitted and sized buoyancy aid (PFD).</li> <li>➤ Wear canoeing helmet for hazardous locations.</li> <li>➤ Avoid Eskimo rescues in shallow rocky waters.</li> <li>➤ See also Medical Conditions.</li> </ul>

<p>c) Overwhelmed by the power of the water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Conditions</li> <li>➤ Exhaustion</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Training / ability to “read water” and swim defensively.</li> <li>➤ All participants to wear correctly fitted and sized buoyancy aid (PFD).</li> <li>➤ Do not canoe if water / weather conditions are beyond safety margins.</li> </ul>
<p>d) Inability to swim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Panic/asthma attack.</li> <li>➤ Medical condition.</li> <li>➤ Illness.</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Participant must be able to swim 50m in grade 1 water in light clothing wearing a correctly fitted and sized buoyancy aid (PFD).</li> <li>➤ Participant must be confident in water, in particular exiting from a capsized canoe.</li> <li>➤ Avoid a heavy meal prior to canoeing.</li> <li>➤ Do not canoe if suffering from the effects of illness, alcohol or drugs that may affect participants ability to swim.</li> </ul>
<p>e) Shock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Hypothermia.</li> <li>➤ Injury.</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Leaders to be aware of the possibility of shock following injury and it's treatment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exposure</b></p> <p>a) Hypothermia (Cold)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Failure in planning.</li> <li>➤ Inadquate warm clothing.</li> <li>➤ Adverse conditions.</li> <li>➤ Illness.</li> <li>➤ Lack of food.</li> <li>➤ Exhaustion.</li> <li>➤ In ability to cope with activity level resulting in multiple or prolonged immersion(s).</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All participants to wear warm, wind and water resistant canoeing clothing suitable for expected / prevailing water and weather conditions.</li> <li>➤ All participants to wear a correctly fitted and sized buoyancy aid (PFD), to help conserve core body warm.</li> <li>➤ Training / ability of leaders and participants to take avoiding measures, identify symptoms and treat mild hypothermia.</li> <li>➤ Pre- trip planning.</li> <li>➤ Group control / leadership.</li> <li>➤ Carry hot drink and food, spare dry clothing, survival shelter or bivy bag, as required.</li> <li>➤ Participants to have sufficient pre-trip food and not be suffering from the affects of illness or alcohol or drugs.</li> <li>➤ The leader should consider if the prevailing weather and water conditions are suitable for the activity, in adverse conditions adjust activity accordingly.</li> </ul>
<p>b) Frost bite / nip</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Avoid canoeing activity in freezing temperatures.</li> </ul>

<p>c) Hyperthermia (Hot), Heat Exhaustion and Dehydration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ High temperature.</li> <li>➤ Prolonged exposure to sun.</li> <li>➤ Lack of fluids intake.</li> <li>➤ Illness</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Avoid excessive strenuous or prolonged exercise in hot conditions.</li> <li>➤ Wear clothing suitable for hot weather conditions.</li> <li>➤ Drink plenty of water, replenish salts, eat food.</li> <li>➤ Participants should not be suffering from the affects of illness or alcohol or drugs.</li> </ul>
<p>d) Sun burn and “snow blindness”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prolonged exposure to sun.</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Avoid strong sunlight, seek shade when possible.</li> <li>➤ Wear a sun hat (or helmet as appropriate to activity), cover body with light clothing as appropriate.</li> <li>➤ Use waterproof sun tan / block on exposed areas of body.</li> <li>➤ Wear sun glasses to reduce glare if appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p>e) Contamination - pollution - bio and chemical hazards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Infection</li> <li>➤ Illness</li> <li>➤ Weils disease</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Avoid canoeing in waters known to be affected by pollution e.g. next to raw sewage outfalls / disposal points or oil spills from refuelling points / motor boats.</li> <li>➤ Avoid capsizing in areas of stagnant water, or after rain following prolonged drought, to decrease the chances of weils disease from rat urine. At One and Two Star training provide Weils disease information leaflet.</li> <li>➤ Cover any cuts or open wounds with water proof covering.</li> <li>➤ Wash hands prior to food preparation / eating if possible, shower after canoeing if required.</li> <li>➤ Do not drink from low land rivers, or lakes (most areas in UK) or sea water.</li> </ul>
<p>f) Animal and plant life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Irritant</li> <li>➤ Poison</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Avoid canoeing in waters with blue / green algae blooms.</li> <li>➤ Avoid Jelly fish infested waters.</li> <li>➤ Avoid irritant bank side vegetation e.g. Giant Hog weed</li> </ul>
<p>g) Body fluids</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Infection</li> </ul>	<p>Participants and first aiders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If first aid is required where a loss of body fluid has occurred, the first aider should wear protective gloves and suitably contain any items that have become contaminated .</li> </ul>

Injury		
<p>a) Soft Tissue injury</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strains and sprains</li> <li>➤ Lack of warm up prior to physical exercise.</li> </ul>	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sufficient time allowed for participants to warm up and cool down appropriate to the intended canoeing exercise as they so wish.</li> <li>➤ Training / ability to confirm good manual handling techniques for canoeing equipment and canoeing environment in particularly for loading / unloading canoes and during launching and landing.</li> <li>➤ Safe storage systems and transportation of equipment.</li> <li>➤ Reduce the need for high loading on the body encountered during rescues.</li> </ul>
<p>b) Physical impact - soft tissue and bones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Trips, slips and falls.</li> <li>➤ Shoulder dislocations.</li> <li>➤ Broken bones.</li> <li>➤ Bruises.</li> </ul>	Participants and other people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Training / ability to identify and try to avoid potential impact hazards and situations.</li> <li>➤ Training / ability in taking evasive actions should a collision be imminent.</li> <li>➤ Group control and awareness of “personal safety zone” to reduce the chances of collisions with other water users.</li> <li>➤ All participants to wear a correctly fitted and sized buoyancy aid (PFD), to help cushion the affects of any collisions.</li> <li>➤ Wear canoeing helmet for hazardous locations.</li> <li>➤ Shoulder dislocations, ensure correct technique for high brace / recovery. Reduce the need for the high brace through encouraging use of safe low brace / recovery.</li> <li>➤ Be aware of adverse ground conditions, tree roots, rocks and obstructions whilst off the water pre / post activity or portaging / inspecting / rescues during a canoeing activity.</li> <li>➤ Wear suitable footwear with sufficient grip.</li> <li>➤ Exercise care whilst lowering / moving equipment, good manual handling techniques, controlled lowering being aware of “danger zone” during launching or landing from the base of steep banks.</li> <li>➤ Beware of vehicles manoeuvring in car parks, or whilst loading / unloading at road edge or crossing roads to access the river bank.</li> </ul>

<p>c) Cuts and puncture wounds / bites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Trips, slips and falls.</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Wear suitable footwear to avoid cuts to feet from hidden underwater or bank side objects.</li> <li>➤ Trips, slips and falls. Be aware of adverse ground conditions and obstructions whilst off the water or portaging / inspecting during a canoeing activity.</li> <li>➤ Group control and awareness of “personal safety zone” to reduce the chances of collisions with other water users.</li> <li>➤ Ensure safety knives and rescue saws are stowed safely into sheaves / handles.</li> <li>➤ Allow sufficient space to pass wildlife and farm animals particularly with young to avoid being attacked or causing disturbance.</li> <li>➤ Fisher persons, allow sufficient room to pass to avoid getting caught in their lines. If the passage is narrow await for them to indicate a time for safe passage. Beware of discarded fishing tackle in trees or on banks which could have sharp fishing hooks.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Medical Conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Asthma</li> <li>➤ Diabetes</li> <li>➤ Epilepsy</li> <li>➤ Heart</li> <li>➤ Other</li> </ul>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Leader at the start of each session / trip to request from all participants that they inform the leader prior to the commencement of activity of any pre-existing medical conditions that are likely to affect their ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Fully participate without restriction, (the participant may or may not regard themselves as having a disability).</li> <li>b) Render the participant a casualty or requiring access to their medicines or medical attention.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>In particular such conditions would include those that will affect their ability to swim or result in loss of consciousness or susceptibility to cold. Identify any additional precautions if necessary.</p>

<p><b>Cock ups</b></p> <p>a) Navigational error</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<p>➤ Getting lost on or off the water can be just inconvenient or lead to an emergency. The leader should if appropriate consult guide books, information services, take a map, chart and compass, GPS, mobile phone as appropriate.</p>
<p>b) Benighted</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<p>➤ Poor weather conditions may reduce day length in winter, plan to allow plenty of time to complete trip and carry light source if required.</p> <p>➤ For trips that may require an unscheduled over night stay where accommodation is not available, carry camping equipment and additional food.</p>
<p>c) Vehicle or accommodation keys</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<p>➤ Ensure that you securely carry or have bank support access to keys for any vehicles or accommodation's the end of a trip so that participants can immediately change into warm dry clothing to avoid Hypothermia.</p>
<p>Weather</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leader/Coach to obtain recent forecast prior to event.</li> <li>2. Poor weather conditions may reduce day length in the winter, plan to allow plenty of time to complete trip and carry light source if required.</li> <li>3. On open or exposed rivers or lakes consider the affects of wind with regard to Hypothermia and exhaustion and the progress of a trip.</li> </ol>



## **Risk Assessment**

**Date:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Activity Leader:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Activity: Canoeing (generic)**

**Location:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Weather Conditions:**

[Click here to enter text.](#)