



Normal Operating Procedure (inc. Risk Assessment) Open Canoeing

Risk Profile

The following risks have been identified through PGL's risk assessment process:

- a. Drowning – primary and secondary.
- b. Entrapment – in equipment, in water or underwater and surrounding wildlife.
- c. Hypothermia.
- d. Hyperthermia.
- e. Slips, trips, falls or being pushed – onto wet surfaces, into water, onto equipment.
- f. Injury to participants when not wearing adequate footwear.
- g. Injuries when constructing, lifting, moving & carrying equipment.
- h. Lightning.
- i. Equipment failure – in craft/equipment used by participants or safety craft operated by instructors.
- j. Injury caused by activities running in the close proxy and other's raft games.
- k. Lost person/s and injures due to moving water, high winds, large waves, poor visibility.
- l. Paddle injuries, specifically to the head.
- m. Bites, stings, infections, and allergic reactions from wildlife in and around the water.

Implementation of the following operating procedures reduces the residual risk to a level as low as reasonably practicable given the intended purpose of the activity.

Control Measures

Deployment Requirements

Instructor Qualifications:	Trained and assessed as competent by an approved PGL assessor.
Instructor – Participant ratio:	1:15 + 1 Acc. Adult with provision made for lone working, (accompanying adult present or immediately adjacent to other staffed activity bases).
Total group size:	15
Active participation:	1:15



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1. Equipment Requirements

Per Instructor and Participant:

- 1x Buoyancy aids
- 1x Water/wind resistant jack (at instructors discretion)
- Paddle and canoe

Per off site groups (up to grade 2 water):

- 1 x Offsite first aid kit
- 1 x Group shelter
- Spare paddles
- 1x Route plan with emergency egress points
- 1x Mobile phone (only 1 per group/session)
- 1x Money and centre contact details
- 1x Clothing suitable for dealing with cold/immersion hazards for up to three participants

Non shelter environments:

- Additional buoyancy for all boats where appropriate to craft
- Rescue kit appropriate to the venue

Per Activity Base:

- 1x Throw line
- An area used for secure storage of rafting equipment
- A clearly set aside area for damaged boats must be in place
- An obvious launch point suited to repeated launching of canoes (for both the canoes and the environment)

2. Specific Clothing Requirements

Participant & Instructor:

- Suitably closed toe footwear that stays on in water
- Clothing suitable for conditions (no denim)

3. Session Preparation

- a. Assess general water quality and weather.
- b. Inspect venue for debris.
- c. Offsite venues must be checked against site specific operating procedures e.g. river height/wind level cut offs by suitably qualified or experienced senior staff.

4. Session Instruction

- a. Demonstrate and check correct fitting of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- b. Give a short and clear safety briefing which must include:
 - i. Outline of session and boundaries.
 - ii. A dry land demo of a capsize drill in line training received.
 - iii. Possible hazards at the venue.
- c. Ensure that all questions/concerns have been addressed before group get onto the water.



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- d. Ensure all games/exercises are appropriate to age range/ability of the group and in line with party leaders expectations.
- e. Ensure rescues are dealt with efficiently and with minimum risk to self, group and casualty.
- f. Ensure action to safeguard the group is taken if a change in weather conditions/water levels occurs.
- g. Ensure all guests and staff wear the correct PPE at all times throughout the session, if they are removed for any reason they must be checked by a qualified member of staff before re commencing the activity.
- h. Ensure that all staff are involved in the session and are positioned in the optimum position to ensure group control, learning and safety.
- i. Swimming games used as time fillers are to operate within the guidance of the Water Safety Management NOP.

5. Session Conclusion

- a. If the group has been offsite follow local sign in procedure.
 - b. Canoes to be stored away in line with the ACOP.
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