

BCU Level 1 Certificate in Coaching Paddlesport

Pre-course Information

The Level 1 is the first step on the Paddlesport Coaching Pathway. The qualification introduces new coaches to the concepts underpinning good coaching practice and helps them understand and coach technical and tactical elements of the sport.

This pre-course information provides an overview of the British Canoe Union (BCU) Level 1 Certificate in Coaching Paddlesport. It will inform prospective candidates what the qualification is all about and should help them decide if it is the right course to take.

This pre-course information contains information about:

1. What a BCU Level 1 Paddlesport Coach can do
2. Who the course is designed for
3. Options for candidates who already hold BCU Coaching qualifications
4. Bank- and boat-based options
5. What the course involves
6. What the course covers
7. Assessment
8. Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning
9. First Aid and Criminal Record Checks
10. What to do next

1. What can a BCU Level 1 Paddlesport Coach do?

Assist higher level coaches

A BCU Level 1 Coach is trained and assessed to assist BCU Level 2 Coaches and above, delivering aspects of a coaching session, normally under direct supervision. Whilst under direct supervision there is no restriction as to whom the Level 1 Coach can assist. This will be dependent upon a range of circumstances such as their personal experience, the venue, coaching group, and area of personal interest. This could include coaching any of the competitive and non-competitive disciplines at any level. The supervising Coach will be responsible for appropriately deploying the Level 1 and must be qualified to coach in the particular environment.

Run taster sessions

In certain circumstances, the Level 1 Coach can run taster sessions without direct supervision. An example of this is where a supervising Coach has identified and defined appropriate sheltered water conditions, provided the Level 1 Coach with session guidelines, and detailed site specific operating procedures which must be adhered to.

Coach paddlers in a variety of craft

All Level 1 Coaches can coach participants in straight running or flat-hulled, solo or crew canoes and kayaks up to BCU 1 Star and Paddlepower Passport standard. Level 1 Coaches with recognised personal experience will be able to do more than this, based on their experience and skills.

Assess BCU Performance Awards

The Level 1 Coach can assess the BCU Paddlesport Start and Paddlepower Start Awards.

2. Who is the Level 1 course designed for?

The BCU Level 1 Certificate in Coaching Paddlesport is appropriate for individuals new to coaching, who have some knowledge of paddlesport, and wish to learn how to help others enjoy paddling. The qualification is appropriate to individuals who want to coach any of the various paddlesport disciplines. Level 1 Coaches will build skills during the course that will continue to develop as they start to coach under the guidance of a more qualified coach.

This course is designed for a range of people, for example:

- A non-paddling parent of a child in a club
- A paddler who wants to help out in their local club
- Someone who wants to work in an activity centre

Before candidates can register for the Level 1 course they must meet the prerequisites:

- Be at least 16 years old on the first day of the course
- Understand the basics of manoeuvring a canoe or kayak, through participation in the sport or from observation.

3. What about Candidates who already hold BCU Coaching Qualifications?

It is not necessarily appropriate for active BCU Level 1 Coaches or Trainee Level 2 Coaches who qualified before September 2007 to undertake the full 'new' Level 1 programme.

Options for Existing BCU Level 1 Coaches:

- Coach under their existing Level 1 remit
- Transfer to 'new' Level 1 with a one day transfer module

Options for Existing BCU Trainee Level 2 Coaches:

- Transfer to 'new' Level 1 with a one day transfer module
- Take an 'old' BCU Level 2 Assessment
- Bypass 'new' Level 1 and register direct for the 'new' Level 2 Training

The process of transferring to Level 1 will involve an assessment of performance against the criteria laid down within the new awards. There will be an element of revision and a few new topics will be introduced. The transfer will involve a maximum of a 1 day course (1:1 assessments could be achieved in a shorter timescale) and some prior homework. Coaches transferring to the Boat-based Level 1 are also required to hold the New BCU 2 Star Award¹.

4. Bank- and Boat-Based Options

The BCU Level 1 Certificate in Coaching Paddlesport is available as either a Boat- or Bank-based option. Boat-based Coaches are required to hold the New BCU 2 Star Award¹ (prior to the practical coaching and rescue assessments) to demonstrate they have the personal paddling skill required to provide safety cover and move around the working site. In contrast, Bank-based Coaches have to demonstrate their ability to manage the coaching environment effectively from the shore and provide effective and appropriate safety cover. Whilst the two routes do exist, most courses will be open to both Bank- and Boat-based candidates.

¹ Or the 'old' 2 Star Kayak, and 2 Star Canoe.

5. What does the course involve?

The course involves 4 days (32 hours) of contact time, this includes learning and assessment. The BCU Canoe Safety Test or Foundation Safety and Rescue Course² is a prerequisite of the first day. Course deliverers can choose to ask candidates to bring this award with them, or include this element within their course package (which becomes a five day course). Different deliverers will put together training courses in many diverse ways, but they will all include the same core information. Candidates should try to access a course that best suits their learning needs and previous experience.

Some different delivery options could include:

- An intensive all-inclusive 5 day block course (including safety training)
- 4 consecutive Saturdays at a local club (not including safety training)
- 8 evening sessions (not including safety training)

6. What does the course cover?

The BCU Certificate in Coaching Paddlesport develops your ability to plan, deliver and review, safe, ethical, and effective paddlesport sessions. On the course you will develop 'how to coach' skills alongside technical understanding 'what to coach' specifically relating to the skills beginners require. The course will cover how to:

- prepare coaching activities, taking into account participants' needs and motives
- establish a safe working environment
- deliver prepared activities
- establish working relationships with participants and others
- prepare participants' for the coaching activities
- support participants' behaviour
- conclude the activities
- evaluate the effectiveness of coaching activities
- evaluate the effectiveness of personal coaching practice
- manage effective and appropriate bank and water based rescues

A range of coaching tips and tricks, games and activities will be built into the course along with time spent developing your technical/tactical understanding.

² The New Foundation Safety and Rescue Course is not available until early 2008, therefore all Boat-based Coaches will be required to attain the Canoe Safety Test, whilst Bank-based Coaches will need to access specific safety and rescue training via the Level 1 course provider.

7. How and when will Candidates be assessed?

There are five assessment tasks that candidates must successfully complete before they can gain the Level 1 qualification. The tasks include the assessment of:

- Safety and rescue skills
- Coaching skills
- Technical understanding of paddlesport

The assessments are based on a mix of practical tasks, a multiple choice question paper and tutor questioning.

8. Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning (APEL)

Candidates who have covered the course material through alternative learning opportunities can apply to BCU Awarding for Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning (APEL). BCU Awarding aims to recognise learners' previous achievements and experience through APEL. Evidence may be acquired through additional study, employment, or voluntary work that relates to the units within the BCU Level 1 Certificate in Coaching Paddlesport. This evidence can be submitted to BCU Awarding for review of authenticity/currency and mapping against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. The APEL Guidelines are available from BCU Awarding upon request.

9. First Aid Certificates and Criminal Record Checks

BCU Level 1 Coaches are **not** required to hold a valid first aid certificate or have a BCU recognised Criminal Record Check for Certification. You are however, recommended to hold both a valid first aid certificate and Criminal Record Check as good practice, it may also be a requirement of deployment.

For more information on Criminal Record Checks please see the BCU's Child Protection and Criminal Records Policy. This can be found at www.bcu.org.uk, or on the Home Nation website. Alternatively printed copies can be requested from the British Canoe Union.

Information about recommended first aid qualifications is available at www.bcu.org.uk, your Home Nation website, or Coaching Office.

10. What next?

If candidates want to achieve the Level 1 Paddlesport Coach Qualification they need to:

**Find a suitable course and book a place
&
Register with BCU Awarding**

All candidates are required to register with BCU Awarding prior to embarking on the Level 1 course. Registration forms can either be obtained directly from BCU Awarding, from the Home Nation Governing Body (Canoe Association of Northern Ireland, Canoe England, Scottish Canoe Association or Welsh Canoeing Association), or via the course provider.

Registration costs £55 and covers the cost of the induction pack, 12 months third party liability insurance and Coach Licence, and supports the administrative costs associated with the qualification. (A discounted rate of £39 is available for candidates who are already members of the BCU through their Home Nation Governing Body.)

Contact Details:

Further information can be obtained from the Home Nation Associations or from BCU Awarding:

Canoe England

18 Market Place
Bingham
Nottingham NG13 8AP
Tel: 0845 370 9500
Fax: 0845 370 9501
Email: englishcoaching@bcu.org.uk
Website: www.canoe-england.org.uk

Scottish Canoe Association

Caledonia House
South Gyle
Edinburgh EH12 9DQ
Tel: 0131 317 7314
Fax: 0131 317 7319
Email: general.office@canoescotland.com
Website: www.canoescotland.com

Welsh Canoeing Association

Canolfan Tryweryn
Frongoch
Bala
Gwynedd LL23 7NU
Tel: 01678 521199
Fax: 01678 521158
Email: welsh.canoeing@virgin.net
Website: www.welsh-canoeing.org.uk

Canoe Association of Northern Ireland

Unit 2 Rivers Edge
13-15 Ravenhill Road
Belfast BT6 8DN
Tel: 0870 240 5065
Email: office@cani.org.uk
Website: www.cani.org.uk

British Canoe Union Awarding

18 Market Place
Bingham
Nottingham NG13 8AP
Tel: 0845 370 9500
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Website: www.bcu.org.uk/awarding