

Risk Assessment – HOAA Canoeing

Location: Durham Rowing Club	Assessment date: March 2024	Review: March 2025 or earlier in light of experience	
Benefits of the activity: Canoeing enables people with a range of disabilities to experience activity, exercise, stimulation, fun and friendly competition and a sense of adventure and achievement at a level appropriate to their ability. Our aim is to help participants to become confident and enjoy the experience. Some may participate and even excel in canoeing who may have difficulties participating in other forms of physical activity.			
Those affected:	A: participants with disabilities	B: other participants, instructors & helpers	C: parents, carers, spectators

Hazards	Affected	Hazards	Affected
Drowning	A, B	Lifting injuries	A, B
Hypothermia/severe cold/sunburn	A, B, C	Trapped fingers	A,B
Falls and slips, embarkation accidents	A, B , C	Injury by moving vehicles/trailers	A, B, C
Underwater dangers	A, B	Weil's disease	A, B
		Fitting/medical problem	A

Hazard (as above)	Explanatory details	Precautions taken to reduce risk	Risk H,M,L
Drowning	Canoe capsize, submersion in cold water, panicking swimmer, possible entrapment.	Bouyancy aids worn at all times by all participants, adequate and secure canoe buoyancy, experienced boat captains, careful attention to be paid to river and weather conditions and the capabilities of crew members in deciding boat crews. If necessary paddle in company, adjust or cancel activity. Briefing exchanged on hazards, briefing to participants on action in event of capsize. Appropriate supply of throwlines and spare paddles secured into boats. Check all boats accounted for at finish.	L
Hypothermia/severe cold/sunburn	Danger of hypothermia in cold, windy conditions while participating, waiting, supervising or spectating and particularly following immersion. Sunburn	All to be appropriately clothed with windproofs over warm layers and headwear as required. All to assist following capsize to minimize time in water. Appropriate supply of spare paddles. All equipment secured into boats. Canoeists to have change of clothes, appropriate carers/helpers to assist in drying and changing. Showers available at Durham ARC. Use of sun protection when required by probable exposure/personal	L

		sensitivity.	
Falls and slips, embarkation accidents	Injury or falling into water resulting from slips, trips and difficulties getting into boats. Steps, difficult/slippery/wet banks, access pontoons or jetties.	Participants with mobility/balance difficulties supported as required whenever moving around generally, to wear helmets, buoyancy aids and appropriate footwear, to be supervised in vicinity of water, steps, difficult ground and to be assisted entering boats. Access point/pontoon/jetty selected for optimum safety/security. Helpers should not rush, take time to think, share experience/good practice, keep control of both participant and boat, involve additional help when necessary, avoid risk of personal injury.	L
Underwater dangers	Rocks, debris, sharp objects below waterline. Danger of foot or head injury and bodily impact.	All to wear helmets and buoyancy aids, adequate clothing and appropriate footwear. Entry points to be inspected to avoid unnecessary risk.	L
Lifting injuries	Risk of injury, especially to back, from assisting participants and from carrying and loading boats.	Avoid lifting individuals. Share all loads/tasks among sufficient number to manage comfortably. Show correct lifting techniques to new helpers. Proceed carefully when handling/loading/unloading boats to avoid risk of injury to fellow helpers.	L
Trapped fingers	Risk of trapping fingers between boats or between boat and landing, wall, steps, pontoon etc.	All to avoid placing fingers over boat edge when alongside other boats or fixed objects. Captains to remind crews as necessary.	L
Injury by moving vehicles/trailers		Driver to ensure that there is no danger of vehicle or trailer contacting an individual. Helpers to be engaged to supervise bystanders and keep well clear, informed re intended manoeuvre. Use hazard warning lights. Proceed with caution. When manhandling trailer have adequate help accounting for load and slope. Ensure all clear re intended action. Supervise bystanders as above.	L
Weil's disease	Possible disease carrying vermin at venue.	Brief carers and helpers on risk and symptoms. Cover open cuts at start or en route. Wash any injured areas after leaving water.	L
Fitting/medical problem	Fit or other threatening medical difficulty.	Carers to be involved in all activities. Carers to inform instructors in case of increased risk. Any required inhaler/medication to hand. Protect sufferer as far as possible from immediate injury.	L