



Beaundesert Outdoor Adventures

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) & Risk Assessment: Water sports (Kayaking, Coracling & Raft Building)

Document ID: SOP-BOA-WATER-001

Effective Date: January 2026

Review Date: January 2027

1.0 Purpose

To outline the standardized and safe procedure for conducting water-based activities (Sit on Top Kayaks, Coracles, and Raft Building) on the Beaundesert Water sports Pond. This ensures a high-quality instructional experience while managing the specific risks associated with cold water immersion and manual handling.

2.0 Scope & Instructor Competence

This SOP applies to all instructors and participants engaging in water activities on the pond.

- **Technical Advisor (TA):** Joby Davies, BCU L4 Canoe and Kayak Coach.
- **Authorisation:** Instructors Hold the minimum of Paddle Sport Instructor (Paddle UK) and PSRC (Paddle sport Safety and Rescue Course – or older equivalent) must be In-House Assessed by the Technical Advisor. They then need to be Authorised by Luke Chance (SI) or Martin Kirby – Ops Manager to run sessions on the pond.
- **Safety Cover:** A qualified water safety person (the instructor) must be present for all sessions.

3.0 Location & Ratios

3.1 Location

- **The Venue:** The Water sports Pond is a small, very sheltered water venue.
- **Zoning Combinations:** To avoid congestion on the pond, the only permitted activity combinations are Raft Building & Sit on Top Kayaks OR Raft Building & Coracling.
- **Hazard Zones:**



- **The Cascades/Waterfall:** Located at the top of the pond. Participants must be briefed *not* to approach this area.
- **Upper Terrace Fence:** No participants are allowed past this fence toward the water without a properly fitted Buoyancy Aid.
- **Decking & Banks:** The wooden decking and muddy banks can be extremely slippery when wet.
- **Tunnels/Underground Storage:** Strictly for instructor use only.

3.2 Ratios

- **Standard Ratio:** 1:12 (One Instructor to twelve participants).
- **Maximum Group Size:** 1:12 on the water in crewed Craft (Tandem Kayaks / Raft)

4.0 Equipment

4.1 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- **Buoyancy Aids (PFD – Personal Floatation Device):** Must be worn and correctly fitted by all party members (including spectators near the water). Instructors must ensure the **PFD** will not ride up significantly. If so, it is too big and a smaller one should be fitted.
- **Helmets:** Must be worn by participants before going on the water or before raft construction starts. Visiting staff helping participants in/out of boats must also wear helmets.
- **Clothing/Footwear:** Secure footwear must be worn (strictly NO wellington boots, flip flops, Sliders or cros). Spare clothing should be available in the emergency bag.

4.2 Safety & Rescue Equipment

- **Communications:** Instructors must carry a mobile phone AND a site radio at all times.
- **Instructor Kit:** The instructor must have a safety knife on their person at all times while on the water.
- **Bank Kit:** A throw line must be with the instructor when on the bank.
- **Emergency Bag:** A dry bag containing a sleeping bag, survival bag, and emergency blankets must be available.

5.0 Safety Briefing & Rules

1. **Water Confidence:** Ensure no member has a medical condition preventing participation and that they are water confident.
2. **No Horseplay:** Strictly NO pushing each other in or messing around on the banks/decking.



3. **Boundaries:** Explain the pond boundaries (buoys) and strictly forbid approaching the cascades/waterfall.

6.0 Session Procedure

6.1 Launch & Manual Handling

- **Instructor Position:** Normally, the instructor will be on the water in the safety boat (Canoe or SOT Kayak) before participants launch. If helping from the bank, the rescue boat must be ready to launch instantly.
- **Manual Handling (Kayaks):** Double Sit on Top Kayaks weigh 30kg+. Instructors must use **drag and slide techniques** rather than lifting. Lifting should be kept to an absolute minimum (e.g., only placing the kayak onto a ledge so the full weight is not lifted).

6.2 Activity Management

- **Cold Monitoring:** The instructor and group leader must monitor participants closely for signs of cold/hypothermia and remove them to their accommodation or somewhere warm / main part of the centre, if necessary.
- **Throwing Rescue Gear:** If rescuing, a life ring must be thrown an arm's reach *in front of* the person (not directly at them), and a throw line must be thrown *past* the person.

6.3 Session Conclusion

- **Clean Down:** Equipment should be washed if required, then hung to dry. Do not store PFDs and helmets directly on the ground.
- **Hygiene (Leptospirosis):** Inform groups they must wash their hands and faces after the session and before eating/drinking. Encourage showering back at camp.
- **Manual Handling:** Groups should be reminded of correct manual handling techniques when moving the craft – dragging and lifting boats. Rolling barrels and carrying logs in pairs as to minimise swinging them around.



7.0 Risk Assessment

Activity: Water sports (Pond) - Kayaking, Coracling, Raft Building

Review Date: January 2027

Assessment by: Martin Kirby – Operations Manager

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls: What are you doing to control hazards?	Risk Rating (with controls)
Drowning / Dry Drowning	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properly fitted Buoyancy Aids worn by all on/near water. • Qualified water safety instructor present. • Young people to be supervised by the water and no young person to be left at the pond alone. 	Trivial
Cold Water Immersion / Hypothermia	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor monitors group. Spare clothes advised for colder weather. • Emergency dry bag (sleeping/survival bags) available. • Dry Sessions – Limited / no splashing advised and wet / balance games kept to a minimum in colder weather. 	Trivial

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls: What are you doing to control hazards?	Risk Rating (with controls)
<p>Entrapment under raft/boat</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor trained to use and carries a safety knife at all times. • Safety boat on the water or at the bank ready to go. • Polypropylene or floating rope used for building the raft where possible as it floats, minimising entanglements underwater 	<p>Trivial</p>
<p>Head Injuries (Impact/Thrown Objects)</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helmets mandatory on water/during raft build. • Rescue rings thrown <i>in front of</i> casualties, not at them. 	<p>Trivial</p>
<p>Slips, Trips & Falls (Decking/Banks)</p>	<p>Participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing regarding slippery decking and upper terrace fence. • Secure footwear required (no crocs/flip flops). • If games encourage standing on the raft or kayak, care should be taken, instructor should be nearby / on the water directly supervising and if it looks like the craft is unsteady, unstable or going to fail, the task should be stopped. 	<p>Tolerable</p>

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls: What are you doing to control hazards?	Risk Rating (with controls)
Infection (Leptospirosis/Weil's Disease)	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All cuts must be covered with waterproof plasters pre-session. Mandatory hand/face washing post-session. 	Tolerable
Manual Handling Injuries	Instructors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of drag and slide techniques for heavy (30kg) kayaks. Avoid full weight lifting where possible. Utilise more people than needed – 6-8 for a raft, and co-ordinated the movement after explaining beforehand. 	Tolerable
Danger Zones (Cascades / Tunnels)	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group briefed not to approach the cascade much past the buoys. Tunnels/underground storage strictly for instructor access only. 	Tolerable
Pinching, Cutting or Splintered from Fibreglass coracles	Everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coracles to be handled carefully and visually inspected prior to use. Any cracks or splits in the coracles should be inspected very carefully and be taken out of service if they pose a risk of pinching. Rough or damaged areas of the coracles should be inspected to minimise splinters from the fibreglass. Take out of use if there is a likelihood of splinters from a certain area. 	



9.0 Document Control & Review History

Document Creation

Action	Name / Role	Date
Created By	Martin Kirby – Operations Manager – L3 Canoe and L2 Kayak Coach	January 2026
Approved By	Martin Kirby, Luke Chance (OM / SI)	January 2026
Technical Auth.	Joby Davies (BCU L4 Coach)	January 2026

Review Log

This document is to be reviewed annually or following any significant incident or change to the activity.

Date of Review	Reviewed By	Comments / Changes Made	Next Review Due
January 2026	MKirby / LChance	Document Created (V1.0). Consolidated Kayaking, Coracles, and Rafting. Added specific hazards for Cascades, Upper Terrace Fence, Fibreglass splits & splinters and Decking.	January 2027

