

Risk Assessment: Trips



Hazards	Who might be harmed	Risk Control Measures	Individual Responsible	When does it need to be actioned	Notes
Capsize, Entrapment and Drowning	All Participants	Participants must wear appropriate buoyancy aids throughout the activity	Individual – to get appropriate buoyancy aid from equipment officer or provide their own, and correctly fastened before approaching the water. Report any damage that occurs to club BA's to equipment officer,	Prior to each trip	
			Trip leader – to check all those on trip have appropriate buoyancy aid for the paddling environment and that it is on and correctly fastened before approaching the water	At start of each trip before paddlers enter the water	
		First Aid training to be in date for any trip leaders	Trip leaders - to be currently qualified in the first aid qualification appropriate to their coaching/leadership level, and carry a first aid kit	Every three years	
		Make all participants aware of the dangers associated with the trip (e.g. objects in the water, trees and obstructions) and what to do if they encounter one	Trip leader – ensure participants are aware of what they may encounter on the trip and proficient to deal with these. To ensure any dangers are communicated to paddlers during the trip	During trip briefing and dynamically throughout the trip	
			Individual - to ensure they understand any potential dangers, remain vigilant and are proficient enough to deal with these	Pre trip and dynamically throughout the trip	
		Leaders to make sure emergency rescue equipment is carried within group	Trip leader – to ensure the group is carrying fully functioning rescue equipment suitable for the trip and environment	Before anyone enters the water	
		Appropriate rescue equipment to be carried by qualified individuals.	Trip leader – to ensure that suitable safety equipment is taken on the trip and that those carrying equipment are suitably qualified to use it.	Before entering the water	
			Individual – to not carry equipment or carry out rescues that they are not trained and qualified to do, unless under direct instruction from a qualified individual/trip leader.	During trip and rescue situation	
Up to date information to be obtained where available on hazards on the route of the planned trip	Trip leader – to source up to date river information on potential hazards wherever possible before a trip takes place.	In the days before a trip takes place to ensure information is still relevant at time of trip			
Ensure suitability of the equipment for the participants and check for entrapment issues.	Trip leader - ensure cockpit size and footrest position of paddlers boats is appropriate. Visually check boats for entrapment issues	Before entering the water			
	Individual – to choose appropriate boats and equipment for the paddle. Visually check equipment for entrapment hazards before entering the water	Before entering the water			
Medical emergency due to pre-existing conditions	All Participants	Leaders to ask all participants to make such conditions known, in confidence, to leader.	Individual - to ensure leader knows of serious known conditions and to share emergency plan with leader. Leader to ensure they understand actions to take and location and use of any condition specific equipment necessary.	Before the session and during session briefing	

Risk Assessment: Trips



Hazards	Who might be harmed	Risk Control Measures	Individual Responsible	When does it need to be actioned	Notes
Sprains, Strains or other injuries	All Participants	Correct paddling techniques and usage of paddle	Trip leader – ensure that paddlers are using paddling techniques that don't cause injury and are using paddles in a safe manner Individuals – Use paddles safely and ensure you have adequate space between yourself and others to ensure contact is not made with other paddlers.	Before and during trip When carrying or using paddles	
		Correct manual handling when carrying boats and equipment	Trip leader – advise individuals on appropriate manual handling techniques for the environment. Where appropriate. Individuals – ensure they are practicing good manual handling techniques and asking for help where appropriate	Wherever equipment is being lifted or carried. During any manual handling activity	
	Avoidance of finger crush injury	Individuals – to keep fingers & thumbs inside the boat, particularly when rafting up and at get ins and get outs	Throughout the trip		
		Trip leader – remind paddlers to keep fingers & thumbs inside the boat	During trip briefing and throughout trip		
	Helmets to be worn where there is a risk of head injury	Trip leader – to assess risk of head injury and ensure participants wear helmets where risks are identified. Ensure all those who will need a helmet during any part of the trip are carrying an appropriate one	Before individuals enter the water and dynamically throughout the trip		
		Individuals – ensure their own helmet is accessible and that it fits correctly and is appropriate for the trip	Before entering the water		
Slips, trips and falls	All Participants	Appropriate get ins, get outs and portages are available	Trip leader – ensure that all participants are physically able to get in and get out of their craft safely at the chosen entry and exit locations. Ensure suitable portages are available for any hazards on the trip, and to enable assistance to anyone needing support. Individuals – inform trip leader of any issues that could impact their ability to get into and out of the boat	Before the trip and during trip briefing During trip briefing or before if appropriate	
		Suitable footwear to be worn	Individual - to wear suitable footwear for the environment that they are paddling in which minimises the risk of slips.	During the trip	
	Hypothermia / Hyperthermia	All Participants	Appropriate clothing to be worn	Trip leaders / individual – to assess conditions and weather forecasts and ensure individuals have appropriate equipment and clothing before anyone enters the water.	Before and dynamically during each trip.
Emergency equipment			Trip Leader - To ensure appropriate safety equipment for the conditions is carried on trips	Before trip	

Hazards	Who might be harmed	Risk Control Measures	Individual Responsible	When does it need to be actioned	Notes
Adverse Weather conditions	All participants	In case of lightning all paddlers should get off the water until storm has passed. Do not shelter under trees.	Trip leader – to ensure they have access to adequate forecasting information	Before and dynamically during the trip	
		River levels to be checked before any participants access the water	Trip leader – to ensure the water level is suitable for all those attending the trip and to be aware of likely rising and falling of the level and how this will affect the features of the river	Before and dynamically during the trip	
		In case of strong winds ensure paddlers can control craft	Trip leader – to assess paddlers have appropriate boats and equipment for the conditions. Individuals – to choose a boat and equipment suitable for the trip and conditions	Before individuals enter the water Before entering the water	
		Enough food and water to be carried for the paddle and temperature	Trip leader – ensure that individuals are aware of the length of time they will be on the water and the conditions they are to expect. To carry additional water where appropriate	Before each trip and when on the water	
			Individual - To ensure they carry enough water and food for the intended paddle	On the trip	
		Sunblock and/or sun protection clothing and hats to be worn where appropriate	Individuals – ensure they have adequate sun protection for themselves	On the trip	
		Regular check ins with all paddlers to ensure they are not adversely affected by the environment during the trip	Trip leader – to check on all paddlers and act where paddlers become affected by environment	Dynamically throughout the trip	
Individuals – to ensure they let trip leader know if they begin to feel affected by the environmental conditions	Dynamically throughout the trip				
Losing contact with paddler	All Participants	During the pre-trip safety briefing individuals are made aware of maximum safe distances between the group for the trip and detail river signals that are to be used.	Trip leader – provide trip briefing with all relevant information before anyone accesses the water and ensure they are aware of paddler locations throughout the trip	During safety briefing at start of trip and dynamically throughout the trip	
			Individual – to listen and to ensure they understand guidance and signals to be used and follow signals from trip leader	During trip briefing and throughout trip	
		In larger group trip leader to deploy proficient paddlers to maintain 'line of sight' chain	Trip leader – to allocate roles to proficient paddlers for the environment and conditions	During times where contact may be difficult within group	
		Appropriate communication methods taken on the trip	Proficient paddler – to be aware where other members of the group are and signal individuals to slow down, wait or speed up where needed	Throughout the trip	
Trip leader – to include basic signals in trip briefing	During trip briefing				
Waterborne diseases and contaminants that could cause illness	All Participants	Ensure that all participants are made aware of waterborne diseases and the general signs and symptoms of these	Trip leader – to remind participants of the risks	During trip briefing and ongoing	
			Club committee – to communicate information regarding any heightened risks in areas where the club operates.	When risks are discovered by the club	
		Paddlers should sanitise their hands before eating/drinking and as soon after the activity as possible and take showers if they are submerged in the water	Individual – to take personal responsibility for their own health and hygiene after each trip to avoid the risks	During & After each trip	

Risk Assessment: Trips



Hazards	Who might be harmed	Risk Control Measures	Individual Responsible	When does it need to be actioned	Notes
Collision with or waves caused by other watercraft	All Participants	Paddlers made aware of other watercraft they may encounter and how to pass these safely	Trip leader – give information during safety briefing and ensure paddlers are aware of approaching craft during trip Individual – to remain vigilant for other craft whilst on the water	During safety briefing and dynamically throughout the paddle Dynamically throughout the paddle	
Equipment Failure and Loss of Equipment	All Participants	Equipment used to be fully functional and suitable for the trip	Trip leader – to check equipment is safe and suitable for the trip	Before any paddlers enter the water	
			Individual – to check any equipment (club or own) is fully functional and suitable for the trip. If unsure to liaise with trip leader to confirm suitability. Inform equipment officer of damage to any NCKC equipment	Before any paddlers enter the water and if damage occurs	
	Public and emergency services	If a boat is lost during a trip relevant authorities should be notified, and all club boats should be clearly labelled	Trip leader – to inform relevant authorities of any lost boats and equipment officer of any lost equipment	When boat is lost or unretrievable	
Injury from wildlife	All Participants	Paddlers warned of the dangers posed by wildlife and how to behave near them	Trip leader – to inform paddlers of known dangers and remain vigilant for any potential dangers. Individual – to be considerate of local wildlife and animals and avoid disturbance of them or their habitat	During trip briefing and dynamically throughout the trip At all times	
Weirs, locks and portages	All Participants	Any weirs and locks on the trip should be assessed before being run by suitably qualified	Trip leader - to assess the water level, hazards and competence of the paddlers and portage if appropriate	When approaching weirs or locks on the trip	
			Individual - to follow direction from the trip leader	When approaching weirs or locks on the trip	
Abuse / Discrimination	Children and vulnerable adults	Club has formal rules and codes of conduct for both members and leaders Club has an appointed trained Welfare Officer with terms of reference set by Paddle UK All leaders to have completed Safeguarding training and refreshers as mandated by Paddle UK. All leaders have undergone DBS checks. Trips leaders – ensure that there are at least two responsible adults present for any interactions with one child or vulnerable adult.	Individual - to follow club policy Trip Leader - to follow club safeguarding policy		

This risk assessment does not negate the need for dynamic risk assessments by trip leaders throughout all trips run by NCKC and dynamic risk assessments should be carried out by trip leaders throughout any trips or activities Refer to the specific operating procedure for the trip.

Date approved by committee	Date reviewed	Changes from previous version
07/01/2026		