



<b>Risk Assessment</b>			
<b>Risk Assessment for the activity of</b>	<b>Woodmill Weir Session</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>13/09/23</b>
<b>Unit/Faculty/Directorate</b>	<b>Southampton University Canoe Club</b>	<b>Assessor</b>	<b>Connor McFarlane (President) Ayla Kuloglu (Vice President) Edward Charleton (Safety Secretary) Alexander Wilson (Training Secretary) Abigail Whitehead (Kit Secretary)</b>
<b>Line Manager/Supervisor</b>		<b>Signed off</b>	
<b>Reviewed by SQEP:</b>	<b>Euan Donovan-Hill</b>	<b>Comments:</b>	<b>British Canoeing Level 1 coach with 7 years of experience, WWSR, 2 day first aid and BC White Water Leader Training</b>

Low water river session involving paddling in Woodmill weir on the river Itchen, with time varying depending on tide but always in daylight hours. Sessions are run with at least one SQEP paddler to 8 people. There must always be at least two experienced paddlers for this activity, and at least three people, however this may be relaxed if there are other water users on the weir. Activities include freestyle kayaking, learning and teaching new paddling strokes, capsize and rolling training, learning white water skills such as safely paddling into white water and learning to swim safely, practising rescue skills.

Where mixed craft are being used, the group leader should additionally have demonstrated competence in rescuing the other craft in use.

# University of Southampton Health & Safety Risk Assessment

Version: 2.3/2017



*Please note: British Canoeing guidance explicitly states that the ratios they suggest are for guidance only and that the local situation may warrant alternative arrangements. We have assessed that while Woodmill Weir is moderate water, a higher ratio of novices to SQEP paddlers is justified if only one person is in the Weir at a time and should a paddler take a swim the weir is not retentive in normal conditions and paddlers will be within their depth very soon and easily able to self rescue. Should the water be above the surfer's right block, consideration should be given to decreasing ratios as the weir becomes more retentive.*

*Where we launch from the university Watersports centre or other sites, their risk assessments will cover risks associated with their site such as slippery launching areas.*

## **Guidance/standards/Reference documents:**

This risk assessment was written using guidance from:

1. SUSU
2. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/Risk/faq.html>
3. <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/uploads/documents/British-Canoeing-Environmental-Definitions-Deployment-Guidance-for-Instructors-Coaches-Leaders-Apr18-v1-1.pdf>

If operating from the University Watersports Centre, risks associated with the premises such as slippery launching areas, fire risks, asbestos and storage of chemicals will be dealt with by Southampton Sport's Risk Assessment.

## **Checks Schedule:**

All kit will be checked twice a year in the club inventories. Any damage is reported, and kit is repaired or replaced before it is used again. The kit secretary (Abigail Whitehead) is responsible for ensuring the inventories are carried out.

Before anyone gets onto the river, an SQEP will check that kit is worn and fitted correctly and is suitable for purpose.

The Itchen safety kit is to be taken on weir sessions and maintained by the safety secretary

## **Competence Requirements:**

Every SQEP has gained suitable experience paddling and in the checking and up keeping of kit. To be counted as a SQEP in the ratios, a person will hold WWSR or have completed site specific training on rescuing from Woodmill weir from someone who holds a WWSR certificate.



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			<b>L</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>S</b>		<b>L</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>S</b>	
			<b>likelihood</b>	<b>importance</b>	<b>severity</b>					
Transmission/ Contraction of Covid 19	Members contracting COVID-19 and falling ill	Everyone	3	2	6	<p><b>All members should be aware of the current COVID-19 guidelines laid out by the government and we expect them to abide by these.</b></p> <p><b>If a member is displaying symptoms or have tested positive for COVID-19, they will be asked not to attend.</b></p>	2	2	4	

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Overexertion whilst paddling	Overheating, Hyperthermia and Dehydration	The Paddler	3	4	9	<p><b>Experienced kayakers are trained to look for common signs of discomfort in other paddlers</b></p> <p><b>Club members are encouraged to take water with them in boats and communicate if they are beginning to feel too hot</b></p> <p><b>Paddlers can be escorted or walked back to shelter to cool down, ending their session early if they wish, whilst maintaining adequate safety ratios at the weir, for those who remain. In extreme cases where this is not possible, the entire group will be taken off the weir.</b></p> <p><b>Club members are advised on what the weather/water conditions are like before the session and to dress appropriately</b></p> <p><b>Coaches are advised to carry additional fluids for anyone suffering from overheating.</b></p>	2	3	4	<p>First aiders will be present on the session to help mitigate and prevent the onset of hyperthermia.</p> <p>Welfare secretary to have attended SUSU training to be better equipped help the people affected in the aftermath.</p>
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Capsizing	Head injuries as a result of hitting rocks or other debris underwater  Bumps, cuts, grazes and other injuries from rocks or other debris	The Paddler	2	4	12	<p><b>Paddlers are advised to tuck forward when capsizing to help mitigate injury</b></p> <p><b>Ensure that PPE such as buoyancy aids and helmets are always worn when paddling</b></p> <p><b>A SQEP will check that helmets and buoyancy aids are worn correctly before entering the water</b></p>	2	2	4	<p>There will be SQEPs present on safety</p> <p>There will be a first aid trained person present on the weir</p>



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Capsizing resulting in swimming	Harm from exiting a boat unintentionally, cuts on feet from sharp objects on the riverbed when walking to the weir or walking to the bank after a swim.	The Paddler	3	2	6	<p><b>Make reasonable endeavours to ensure that appropriate footwear is worn throughout the sessions in and out of the boat.</b></p> <p><b>Advise paddlers to be aware of where they put their hands when climbing out of their boats</b></p> <p><b>Discussing safe swimming with members and how to safely exit a capsized boat, to ensure that no injuries are sustained, or water ingested.</b></p>	2	2	4	<p>There will be SQEPs present on safety</p> <p>There will be a first aid trained person present on the weir</p>



Capsizing resulting in swimming	Hypothermia	The Paddler	3	3	9	<p><b>Experienced kayakers are trained to look for common signs of hypothermia in other paddlers</b></p> <p><b>Warm up exercises can be conducted or cold paddlers can be placed in survival bags/shelters to prevent the onset of hypothermia</b></p> <p><b>Paddlers can be escorted or walked back to shelter to warm up, ending their session early if they wish, whilst maintaining adequate safety ratios at the weir, for those who remain. In extreme cases where this is not possible, the entire group will be taken off the weir.</b></p> <p><b>Club members are advised on what the weather/water conditions are like before leaving for the session, and encouraged to bring thermals with them</b></p>	2	2	4	There will be a first aid trained person present on the weir session
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						<b>Members are encouraged to communicate if they are beginning to feel cold and experienced members will check on them throughout the session.</b>				
Capsizing resulting in swimming	Psychological harm	All paddlers, but particularly novice paddlers	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Paddlers are encouraged to rest post swim to ensure they are okay, and reassurance is given by leaders as needed.</b>  <b>Paddlers can be escorted or walked back to shelter ending their session early if they wish, whilst maintaining adequate safety ratios at the weir, for those who remain</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	Welfare secretary to have attended SUSU training to be better equipped help the mental wellbeing of the swimmer in the aftermath.  Action plan to be put in place for checking in on the mental wellbeing of the paddler/anyone affected, especially if an injury has occurred.





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Live Baiting - Rescue by Intentional Full Body Immersion into water	Hypothermia, Injury from hitting sub-surface objects, entrapment, drowning, head injury, shock, broken bones, collision with casualty	The Rescuer  The Rescuer	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Live Baiting will only be attempted after non immersion rescues have been exhausted or if a livebait is the only viable method of rescue</b>  <b>Only persons with white water safety and rescue should attempt a full body immersion rescue to prevent injury to themselves and the paddler.</b>  <b>Normal paddling PPE must be worn (helmet, WW buoyancy aid)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	Welfare secretary to have attended SUSU training to be better equipped help the mental wellbeing of the rescuer/rescuer in the aftermath.  A First aider will be present at the weir to deal with any injuries as a result of a live bait



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Seal Launching (Entering the water from a height)	Various impact injuries	The Person Seal Launching  Those in vicinity of the paddler	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Seal launching from the weir blocks only to be done when the vicinity is completely clear</b>  <b>Paddlers are taught good bracing technique to reduce risk of shoulder dislocation on impact with the water.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	A First aider will be present at the weir to deal with any injuries as a result of a collision with rocks or another paddler



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Attempting to prevent a capsize	Shoulder injuries and dislocations	The Paddler	2	3	6	<p><b>Correct technique and hazards taught during initial pool sessions</b></p> <p><b>All members are to point out to a paddler if they identify a bad high brace so technique can be rectified.</b></p> <p><b>At least one first aider who knows how to deal with a dislocation will be present at the weir. Triangular bandages in first aid kits.</b></p> <p><b>Previous history of relevant injuries (I.e. past dislocations) to be established by leaders/committee before kayaking.</b></p>	1	3	3	



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Portaging	Slips, trips and falls when walking over uneven surfaces, wet rocks and walking to/from the weir from/to the launch point  Muscle strains from carrying the kayak or using equipment to pull the kayak uphill.	Anyone participating in the portage.  People in close vicinity to the kayaks being moved.	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>All participants to be told in safety talk to wear sturdy footwear with good grip.</b>  <b>If terrain is particularly difficult encourage participants to be encouraged to carry one boat between two.</b>  <b>When deciding to portage, leaders to give consideration to entry height, depth of water and proximity to any downstream hazards.</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	



<p>Entrapment - Capsizing and not being able to roll up</p> <p>Not being able to get out of boat</p> <p>Getting stuck under water and not getting out</p>	<p>Entrapment resulting in Drowning</p>	<p>The Paddler</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>10</p>	<p><b>Ensure that all members have performed a spray-deck test before any other paddling to confirm they know how to and are able to safely exit their boat.</b></p> <p><b>Briefed on potential hazards such as what can cause entrapment- what to do in these situations such as tapping the underside of the kayak. Discussion undertaken prior to going onto the water.</b></p> <p><b>Only experienced members trained to provide a rescue, are encouraged to do so.</b></p> <p><b>The safety of Self (rescuer) and the group is to be ensured before conducting rescues.</b></p> <p><b>Members to be instructed to bang loudly on their boats if requiring a “hand of God” or T rescue</b></p> <p><b>Kit to be checked that it is appropriate for the paddler (boats of an appropriate size and are in suitable repair for the Itchen)</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Safety to be setup comprised of multiple SQEPs</p> <p>Novices to be staggered when entering the weir so there is only one person on there at a time</p>
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<p>Ingesting or exposure to bacteria/viruses in river water</p>	<p>Contraction of Weil's disease, Leptospirosis, Hepatitis A and other waterborne diseases</p>	<p>The Paddler</p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Advise everyone to wash hands thoroughly after being on the river, or handling kit.</b></p> <p><b>Ask club members before the session if they have any cuts, the club will provide plasters from the safety kits as needed which can be used to cover cuts.</b></p> <p><b>Members are advised to read up on various illnesses that can be caused because of submersion in water; discussed at the annual safety meeting.</b></p> <p><b>Paddlers to be briefed on the symptoms of Weil's disease and Hepatitis A and the actions to take themselves if concerned.</b></p> <p><b>Illnesses contracted from paddling to be monitored and reported, collaborating with other water users and the EPA to reduce risk of infectious spread if required.</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<p>Club members are advised to seek medical advice from 111 or a GP if they show symptoms and to disclose that they have been paddling</p>
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Carrying Boats	Injury to back and/or body	Person carrying boat and/or people around them	3	2	6	<p><b>Paddlers are advised to lift boats utilising safe manual handling techniques and carry them on their shoulders when carrying boats on their own. If they do not feel comfortable carrying boats on their own they are encouraged to carry them in pairs.</b></p> <p><b>People carrying boats are advised to be aware of their surroundings and anyone in an area where boats are carried are told to be aware of people carrying boats around them</b></p>	2	2	4	



<p>Using Rescue Equipment and throwlines</p>	<p>Rope can cause injury through rope burn when handled inappropriately.</p> <p>Rope can be snagged in water and if attached incorrectly can cause entrapment or death through drowning.</p>	<p>The Swimmer and Rescuer</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>6</p>	<p><b>Members must attend the annual safety talk which will cover how to accept a throwline</b></p> <p><b>Club throwlines are stored unpacked and re packed before they are used on the water to ensure there are no snags.</b></p> <p><b>New members are taught how to accept a throwline in the water (by catching it, rolling onto back, and holding it over one shoulder).</b></p> <p><b>All rope users must never let the rope slide through their hands, it should always be passed from one hand to another.</b></p> <p><b>It is ensured that only people who have been trained in the use of a piece of rescue equipment attempt to use it.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>4</p>	
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					<p><b>Rescuers must always put their own safety (and the rest of the group first). An appropriate rescue space must be chosen, and the immediate area downstream should be assessed.</b></p> <p><b>Rescuers should consider getting assistance with the holding of a line under tension.</b></p> <p><b>Ropes should never be wrapped around a hand to avoid entrapment.</b></p> <p><b>When throwlines are used it is also important that the areas around the throwline are clear from other people in order to avoid injury.</b></p> <p><b>Rescuers and swimmers should be ready to release the rope if the tension gets too great or the swimmer is being held underwater.</b></p> <p><b>Time permitting, rescuers should also ensure there are no metal items (e.g. Karabiners) that could hit a swimmer on the end</b></p>				
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# University of Southampton Health & Safety Risk Assessment

Version: 2.3/2017





<p>Entrapment by trees</p>	<p>Becoming entangled in tree branches extending out from the banks</p>	<p>The Paddler</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Trees are pointed out as hazards in the pre river talk, and in safety talk.</p> <p>If a fallen tree is blocking the river, it may be decided by the leader that the weir is too dangerous to paddle.</p> <p>Kayaking groups/pages will be checked prior to the session, as often other paddlers in the community will alert people of a newly fallen tree.</p> <p>Where trees are overhanging or otherwise in the water, paddlers will be instructed to stay clear. The leader must assess the risk of entrapment/ the ability of the group to avoid the risk, and portage to avoid the risk where necessary</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>5</p>	
<p>Poisonous Plant life on river bank</p>	<p>Paddlers may come in contact with poisonous plants such as hogweed on the riverside</p>	<p>The Paddler</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>If it is seen group leaders will inform paddlers to steer clear of it and use other parts of river bank</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>2</p>	



**PART B – Action Plan**

**Risk Assessment Action Plan**

Part no.	Action to be taken, incl. Cost	By whom	Target date	Review date	Outcome at review date

Responsible manager's signature:   Print name: Edward John Charleton  Date: 13/09/23	Responsible manager's signature:   Print name: Connor McFarlane  Date: 13/09/23
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## Assessment Guidance

1. Eliminate	Remove the hazard wherever possible which negates the need for further controls	If this is not possible then explain why	
2. Substitute	Replace the hazard with one less hazardous	If not possible then explain why	
3. Physical controls	Examples: enclosure, fume cupboard, glove box	Likely to still require admin controls as well	
4. Admin controls	Examples: training, supervision, signage		
5. Personal protection	Examples: respirators, safety specs, gloves	Last resort as it only protects the individual	

L I K E L I H O O D	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5	
	<b>IMPACT</b>					

Impact		Health & Safety
1	Trivial - insignificant	Very minor injuries e.g. slight bruising
2	Minor	Injuries or illness e.g. small cut or abrasion which require basic first aid treatment even in self-administered.
3	Moderate	Injuries or illness e.g. strain or sprain requiring first aid or medical support.



4	Major	Injuries or illness e.g. broken bone requiring medical support >24 hours and time off work >4 weeks.
5	Severe – extremely significant	Fatality or multiple serious injuries or illness requiring hospital admission or significant time off work.

## Risk process

Likelihood	
1	Rare e.g. 1 in 100,000 chance or higher
2	Unlikely e.g. 1 in 10,000 chance or higher
3	Possible e.g. 1 in 1,000 chance or higher
4	Likely e.g. 1 in 100 chance or higher
5	Very Likely e.g. 1 in 10 chance or higher

Identify the impact and likelihood using the tables above.  
Identify the risk rating by multiplying the Impact by the likelihood using the coloured matrix.

If the risk is amber or red – identify control measures to reduce the risk to as low as is reasonably practicable.

If the residual risk is green, additional controls are not necessary.

If the residual risk is amber the activity can continue but you must identify and implement further controls to reduce the risk to as low as reasonably practicable.

If the residual risk is red **do not continue with the activity** until additional controls have been implemented and the risk is reduced.

Control measures should follow the risk hierarchy, where appropriate as per the pyramid above.

The cost of implementing control measures can be taken into account but should be proportional to the risk i.e. a control to reduce low risk may not need to be carried out if the cost is high but a control to manage high risk means that even at high cost the control would be necessary.

