

Hinckley Canoe Club Coaches Handbook



Star Awards Overview

1 Star Award - The British Canoeing 1 Star Award is a sheltered water award which can be taken in any craft, (Canoe, kayak, sit on top or stand up paddle board)

2 Star Award - Our 2 Star Award is an improvement award which supports the development of fundamental paddlesport skills on sheltered water in which two disciplines must be learnt. (surf kayak, closed cockpit kayak, open cockpit kayak, closed cockpit canoe, solo/tandem open canoe, racing boat, wave-ski, flat-hulled boat, v-shaped hull, slalom boat, polo boat, or sea kayak)

3 Star Sea (Kayak/Sit-on-top) - With our 3 Star Sea Award paddlers can consider themselves as an able and improving sea paddler rather than a beginner

3 Star Surf - Successful performance at this level indicates the candidate's competence to surf in small friendly conditions across a range of beaches and varying tidal conditions, as part of a led group.

3 Star Open Canoe - With our 3 Star Open Canoe Award paddlers can consider themselves to be an intermediate open canoe paddler rather than a beginner.

3 Star White Water (Kayak/OC1) - With the 3 Star White Water Award the paddler can consider themselves an intermediate white water paddler, as they can now paddle on moving waters. This award is available as either a 3 Star White Water Kayak Award or a 3 Star White Water OC1 Award

3 Star Touring (Kayak/Canoe) - Available as both a Canoe and a Kayak based award, successful performance at 3 Star level indicates that a paddler can consider themselves to be an intermediate paddler rather than a beginner, having demonstrated personal competence as a member of a group paddling in a variety of venues. This award is available as either a 3 Star Touring Kayak Award or a 3 Star Touring Canoe Award.

3 Star Freestyle (Kayak/Canoe) - Available as both a Canoe and a Kayak based award, successful performance at this level indicates the paddler understands the core competencies of freestyle and can perform at a base level.

3 Star Wild Water Racing - Successful performance at this level indicates that the paddler can consider themselves an intermediate white water kayak paddler, as they can now paddle on moving waters.

4 star & 5 star awards are leadership awards that can be done in various disciplines

Safety Brief

Your safety brief before any session is very important whether this be to a beginner group or a group of competent experienced paddlers. This may be done as a formal brief or just a quick chat before you get on if it is a group that you already know.

This is the time in which to talk to the participants and for you to gain essential knowledge about your group that you need to know. This may include things such as,

- Medical conditions of the participants
- Their expectations and what they hope to gain from the session
- You to explain to them the agenda for the session and plan for the day
- Safety points that they might need to know
- Rules of the site (Pool, lake or river)
- The ability or experience of the participants
- To check their kit and correct fitting

It is a good idea for you to have a list or a set order of your safety brief to ensure that you do not forget any important part. I have put a list below of what is included in my safety brief and a quick explanation of each part. This list is based upon a beginners sessions of participants that you do not know, it can be adapted for different groups.

1. Introductions – Introduce yourself and a little bit about yourself then go around the group if they do not know each other and ask them about their experience in paddlesport
2. Medical conditions – Ask them if there is any medical conditions that you need to know about, give them a chance to speak to you in private after the safety brief as they may not feel comfortable in front of the whole group
3. Expectations and plan for the session – This is a good chance to ask them what they are expecting from the session and what they hope to gain from the session and also for you to explain to the participants what is going to happen during the session and what the objective and aims are
4. Safety and rules – Any rules of the location and basic safety advice, e.g. first aider on site. This should include things such as location of toilets on site etc
5. Kit – Quick talk about the kit that they are going to be using and explain how to fit it correctly for this session and future use
6. Capsize routine – What to do if they capsize the boat
7. Boundaries – The boundaries of where on the water they are allowed to go, it is important to do this last in the session as most the participants will probably only remember the last thing that you said to them

Most coaches have a small laminated card in their buoyancy aids with these bullet points on so they remember to cover everything

Safeguarding Advice

As a coach whether going within the club or away from the club it is your responsibility to ensure that everyone in your group is safe. This means whilst paddling on the water and also to be aware of any concerns about any person (child or adult) that you might have in their day to day life.

If you suspect that there might be a safeguarding issue either in the club environment or with a member in their home life it is very important that you report this to the club welfare officer (details below)

Hayley Clarke - 07900357795

There are two ways that this may come about in your coaching,

1. A participant may make a disclosure to you – If this happens it is important to be understanding and listen carefully to what that person is saying. Do not ask questions about what they are saying just record what they are telling you (Either write it down or in your head). Please remember they have spoken to you in confidence but it is important for you not to promise them that you will not tell anybody
2. Another member or participant may raise a concern to you – Again you need to listen to what that person is saying and report it to the appropriate person. It is not for you to investigate yourself.
3. You may have a concern of your own about someone – It is important you have as much information as possible to pass onto the welfare officer about what you suspect

Please remember that it is not your decision to decide whether someone is being abused or not, it is just your responsibility to report any concern that you may have.

When you are coaching there are a number of things you can do that are good practise when it comes to safeguarding and working with children,

- Ensure you are never alone with a child in a place where you cannot be seen
- When fitting kit try and get them or their parents to do up any buckles or straps
- If adjusting foot rests ensure that the child is out of the boat when reaching hands into the boat
- If picking a child up from in the water during a rescue or any other rescue try to use buoyancy aid straps etc to hold them rather than arms, hands or legs
- Talk to the children in an appropriate manner. E.G no swearing or rude content

Resources

Below are a number of different resources that are useful to enhance your coaching knowledge or places to look if you are unsure of anything,

BCU website

BCU Coaching Handbook

BCU Canoe & Kayak Handbook

UK River Guidebook Website

Other coaches both inside and outside of the club

Canoe & Kayak Games book



Game Ideas

Here are a list of games that you can use during your sessions as it is important to keep your sessions fun and light hearted.

- Tug of war
- Races
- Kayak Polo
- Pin the tail on the boat
- Dodgeball
- Tig / Tag
- Follow the leader

Working with children

Here are some tips and advice when working with children, it is important to bear these in mind when you are coaching or supervising children on the water.

- Remember they are not adults that you are teaching, they don't want to be practising forwards paddling for an hour just paddling from one buoy to another. They want to play games and have fun!!
- Give them simple instructions, if you give them a million instructions at once they will not do any of them. One instruction at a time
- Be patient with them
- Do not be afraid to enforce the rules
- Keep in mind the safeguarding knowledge that you know
- Keep it fun and light-hearted

Expected Standards of HCC Coaching Sessions

- Always give a safety brief at the start of all sessions, this may vary from a full formal briefing to just a quick chat before getting on the water about injuries and to explain the agenda of the session
- Kit checks before launching. Correcting fitting buoyancy aids etc
- Try and ensure that everyone in your group is in the correct ability group, if you feel that they are too good or not good enough for the skill level of your group try and arrange for them to move into the correct group or session
- All under 16's must have a helmet on while on the water at the lake
- Ensure everyone within your group has signed on at the container and has been given an arm band of the correct colour
- If any first aid treatment is given then an incident report form must be filled in by the first aid and the Level 2 who is running the lake that night must be informed
- All under 8's must have a parent or guardian on the water with them, also anyone between the ages of 8-16 must have a parent or guardian on site but they do not have to be on the water with them
- No paddlers are allowed to paddle around the lake alone (unless a coach), they must always be in a group of 2 minimum