Paddlesport Risk Assessment - Master

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Hazard	Potential Risk	Actions to Reduce Risk	Risk Level
Trips and falls from pontoon/dockside/ waters edge into water	Drowning	Personal buoyancy is worn at all times on the pontoon (under 18's) and afloat (everyone). Participants supervised by instructor when near water. Participants briefed not to run or push each other. Pontoon washed and regularly checked for trip hazards.	Medium
Slippery pontoon surface	Injury caused by slipping, tripping	Warning of risk of slipping. No running on the pontoon. Instruction given as to the safest way of launching boats. Seasonal pressure wash of pontoon. Spot cleaning as required throughout the year.	High
Lifting equipment on / off racks or trailers	Strain injury to back, shoulders, trunk	Briefing given by the instructor and supervision by the instructor to ensure safe lifting and handling techniques. New Paddlers - Minimum of two persons per boat when moving boats from storage. Competent paddlers can carry their own boats, applying use of proper manual handling techniques.	Medium
Launching & recovering in close proximity of numerous craft & persons	Trap and impact injuries caused by participants caught between boats or hit by paddles. Capsize.	Instructor supervision. Instructor prepared to carry out a rescue before participants go afloat. Participants briefed as to using paddles in confined space and dangers of trapping fingers between boats. For large groups, entry/egress should be "staggered" to avoid overcrowding	medium

Immersion in water through capsize or fall from craft	Drowning	Personal buoyancy is worn at all times on the pontoon (under 18's) and afloat (everyone). Immediate response by the afloat instructors to every capsize for beginner sessions. Group to be briefed on action to take in case of capsize E.G Exit their boat, Hold onto paddle & Boat Group to be briefed on actions to take while rescue is taking place (Paddle to side, clear the center) When paddling a closed cockpit kayak (which may pose an entrapment risk) Participants to conduct capsize drill ashore prior to going afloat.	Medium
Immersion in water through capsize or fall from craft	Hypothermia	Wet-suits are available for sessions where immersion is likely. Issue of wind proof clothing reduces the risk of post immersion hypothermia. Minimise duration of immersion by controlling the teaching area and ensuring instructors are positioned for best visibility of the group. TPA's carried by all instructors. Plan in place for evacuation ashore/to centre where there is a risk of hypothermia developing.	Medium
Entrapment during capsize	Drowning	Immediate response by the afloat instructors to every capsize for beginner sessions. When paddling a closed cockpit kayak (which may pose an entrapment risk) Participants to conduct capsize drill ashore prior to going afloat. and group to be briefed on action to take whilst rescue in progress. Footwear to be checked before session to anticipate problems with inflexible soles. Craft must be suitable for participants - instructor to pay particular care to stability, cockpit size and position of footrests.	Low
Participants becoming cold / wet	Hypothermia	Windproof clothing is issued. Wetsuits are issued if required / as appropriate. Alternative activities to be pursued in the event of inclement conditions - at session lead's discretion.	Medium

Being struck by paddle	Personal injury, particularly head injuries	Specific advice / warning given about dangers of wielding paddles in confined space. If splashing is to be allowed, strict rules must govern distance between boats and the dangers to those in the same boat. Correct sized paddles to be used. Helmets to be issued for games with a greater risk of paddle contact (e.g. polo)	Medium
Rafting up and coming alongside pontoon	Trapped finger injury	Warning to be included in the initial briefing. Reinforcement throughout the session when boats are to be rafted or come alongside. Group supervision. First aid kits available to instructors.	Low
Strong winds	Losing contact, exhaustion or capsize due to choppy water. Inability to return to base.	Activity only to take place in suitable conditions. Group control maintained to avoid losing contact - boundaries set and a clear system of recall used. Towlines to be carried. (Mitigation of capsize scenario as above). Alternative activities to be pursued in the event of inclement conditions at session lead's discretion. Paddlers may need to walk back (if kit needs to be left, bring as much as possible back and leave boats only)	Medium
Waterborne disease	Illness	Regular water monitoring conducted and sessions suspended if advised by EA/CRT. Participants advised to wash their hands after activity. Participants encouraged to shower after falling in. Antibacterial hand gel available at centre.	High
Over exertion	Sports injury, sprains and strains	All participants to participate in an on or off water warm up before taking part in activities. Pace of activities built up slowly.	Medium

Paddling on moving water (PUK Terms of Reference - Moderate Water)	Head injuries from hitting submerged objects when capsized.	Helmets to be worn at all times on or near the water. Participants briefed in capsize actions - roll, rescue, safe swimming actions.	High
Paddling on moving water	Swamping	Spraydecks to be worm on moving water. Participants to be briefed and carry out a dry land drill on correct release of spraydeck. In canoes floatation blocks fitted and regular bailing opportunities needed.	High
Paddling on moving water (PUK Terms of Reference - Moderate Water)	Risks as for flat water but carrying additional risk due to the environmental factors associated with moving water	All coaches to be suitably qualified and equipped as per PUK guidelines for operating in a moderate water environment. Dynamic RA to be carried out at each venue/feature.	High
Lone working in remote areas	Risks to group if Leader becomes injured or incapacitated	Mobile phone (no passcode) with emergency contacts saved. Small card with instructions for the group to get out of the situation carried on my person - see lone working EAP. Information given to the group in the initial briefing.	High

Lone working Emergency Action Plan	Instructions for group to follow should I become incapacitated and they need to deal with the situation.	If anything happens to me, do the following: **STOP -** get everyone off of the water and to a place of safety. **ASSESS -** the situation, what has happened, who is affected, where are you and where do you need to get to, what help do you need? **FORMULATE -** a plan to deal with the situation. My mobile phone has a selection of numbers saved under 'A EMERGENCY HELP' in the contacts. They will be able to advise you. The app 'OS LOCATE' will give you your position. You can send a text to '999' from messages - this will be the best option if there is little signal. There is a FIRST AID KIT in the back of my boat. **EXECUTE -** take the actions required to get to safety.	
Site Specific Risk Assessments - Includes all of the above and:			
Poor water quality	Potential for paddlers to get sick from water bourne bacteria and kit to get oily from discharge in the river	EA monitoring stations on site issue warnings when water quality is low. The EDM Map will show if there have been any releases in the past 48 hours. In this instance, training where immersion is required will stop. Following heavy rain or if the river looks poor, a dynamic assessment will be made and training may move upstream of the known areas of issue (beyond the Marina, or above Tottenham Lock for FSRT or similar). Hand washing/sanitizing before eating.	High
Other river users	Risk of collision with rowing boats and barges leading to injury	Coaches & Instructors to keep a lookout for traffic. Paddlers to keep to right hand side of the waterway when travelling, or to go to the either side when in a location and allow traffic to pass. Any issues or collisions to be reported to senior staff at Leaside	Medium

Deliberate immersion for rescue training	Increased risk of entrapment and water bourne issues	All training to be carried out by qualified staff. A dynamic assessment to be made on the water quality, Briefing to cover expectations of group to work in pairs with only one person in the water at a time with the other providing cover.	Low
Normal Center Operating areas - Taster sessions	For the delivery of taster sessions, PIA courses or PI's (with SST) working alone there is a higher chance of assistance being required.	Operating area is from the railway bridge downstream to the rowing club upstream (approximately 250m in either direction). There is good access to the towpath and a busy pathway so help can be raised. Group can leave kit and walk back to site if required. 	Low
Operating areas	Level 2 coaches and above (plans to be communicated to centre staff in morning briefing)	Operating area limited by time available and may extend as far as: limehouse basin, laburnum boat club, Enfield Lock and include the River Lea backwaters and channels. A mobile phone, first aid kit and towing method must be carried when offsite.	Medium

Operating Ratios	Level 2 Coach (equivalent or above). They do not need to be on the water necessarily and should be available on the radio or phone and know what the session plans are. Paddlesport Instructors with SST and First Aid qualification are permitted to work alone within the operating procedures and with centre manager approval.	The normal operating ratio for all instructors is 1:10. This can be increased to 1:12 to accommodate extra people without any additional plans. Large groups can operate a ratio of 2:30 in suitable craft, under the supervision of a level 2 coach.	Medium
Old River Lea (the Jungle)	Level 2 coaches - plans to be communicated to centre staff in the morning independent paddlers to access the jungle at their own risk	The jungle is outside of our standard operating area, it poses additional extra risk, snag hazards and additional water speed: Independent paddling groups can access at their own risk. The jungle is in the extended operating area for coaches	Medium
Weirs - Middlesex Filter Beds Weir	Paddling below the weir presents several additional risks to groups. Including but not exclusively, additional snag hazards, Strong currents, Shallow water & potential recirculating currents.	The Weir is outside of our standard operating area, as it poses additional risks to groups. It is within the extended operating area for coaches, but a site specific induction is necessary. Any use of the weir is to be agreed with senior coaches ahead of time.	Medium