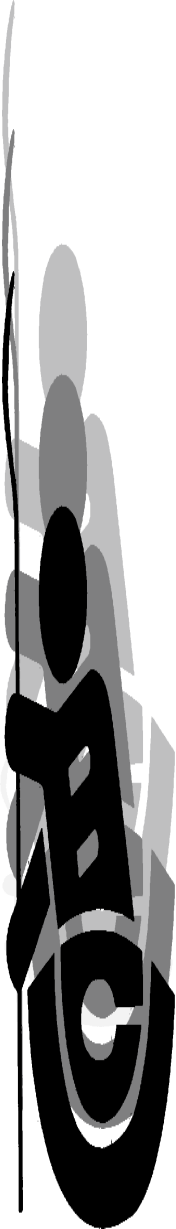


# British Canoe Union Coaching Service

## CENTRES APPROVAL SCHEME

Terms of reference for the  
conduct of canoeing activities



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## INTRODUCTION

It is presumed throughout these guidelines that Centres will operate a training regime for every employee involved, relevant to the locations in use, which will ensure that the instructor concerned has adequate personal competence, is equipped and practised in the use of all necessary equipment, and is aware of all the potential hazards of the environment in question.

It is also presumed that equipment will be maintained to the standards as set out in appendix I, and that students will be trained in its application and use.

In the following guidelines the BCU is seeking to set out examples of good practice, related to an appreciation of the actual level of risk in each of the situations identified.

There is obviously a very different level of risk involved where groups are journeying on the sea, compared with a first session introductory lesson on very sheltered water inland. In the first instance, a Level 3 Sea Coach is the minimum requirement for the instructor in charge on the water, whilst in the latter case the bottom level of qualification - the Level 1 Coach award - is adequate.

### *Types of Centre*

Safe operational delivery of canoeing in centres will be dependent upon the emphasis of the particular course of instruction. In this context, centres are generally perceived to work in three main ways, including:

Activity Holiday Companies - typically providing one-off introductory sessions on very sheltered water.

Education Authority Companies - the emphasis (but not the entire end purpose) being on the canoe/kayak as a vehicle for achieving educational, and personal, development.

Outdoor Activity Centres - the emphasis (but not the entire end purpose) being on the introduction of candidates to the skills, techniques and understanding of the sport and its practice, to lead them into competent participation.

The reality is that there is invariably overlap, and the implication of this is acknowledged throughout these guidelines.

### *BCU Policy*

The BCU assumes the integrity of the management and those performing in the field, and wishes to offer its support to Centres which operate within accepted good practice. Any reading of these guidelines with a view to seeking 'loopholes' or to establish 'the minimum we can get away with' is out of keeping with the spirit in which they are presented.

Should doubt exist concerning interpretation of the parameters which have been set, this should be taken up with the Director of Coaching at the BCU or your National Association appointed person, and clarification sought in writing.

## **SWIMMING ABILITY AND BUOYANCY AIDS**

All students undertaking canoeing activities outside of swimming pools must wear a buoyancy aid or a lifejacket, the fitting of which should be checked by a suitably qualified leader, who has given instruction on application and use.

Normally canoeists should be able to swim 50 metres in light clothing. Discretion may be exercised, however, in accordance with the instructor's training and experience, where special circumstances exist. Some non-swimmers may, in fact, be safely introduced to canoeing by trained instructors, in a controlled environment, as a means of introducing water confidence.

*The BCU recommendation with regard to personal buoyancy is:*

It is recommended that buoyancy aids to BCU/BACT Standard BA 83 or CEN 50N standard be worn by novices for all canoeing activities, and for white water paddling at all levels.

Buoyancy aids to BMIF Standards are normally suitable alternatives, but are not permitted for BCU ranking competitions. For canoe polo additional body protection may be required. Some lifejackets to BS3595, or CEN standards are also suitable alternatives for activities outside ranking competition.

Where race training is being undertaken by those under 18, buoyancy aids may be dispensed with only at the discretion of the coach in charge.

Buoyancy aids should have (at least) an annual test for flotation and regular visual shell checks to ensure it's continued integrity. ( leaflet CB556/97)

## **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **The Centre**

Centres must hold adequate public and employers' liability insurance.

A safety policy statement must be in force.

A satisfactory operational plan must be in place, together with an emergency action plan.

The Centre must ensure that there is adequate first aid provision available at all times, both on and off the water.

### **Participants**

Buoyancy Aids or Lifejackets must be worn which are correctly fitting and must be checked by the instructor before going afloat. A release system, which ensures immediate disengagement from the front of the cockpit rim, must be in place when spray decks are worn.

When helmets need to be worn they must be correctly adjusted and checked by the instructor. Clothing must be appropriate, taking into account the following factors:

Water temperature, air temperature, wind chill factor, the ability of the group, the type of activity, the length of the session and the location (ie availability of support).

Suitable foot protection must be worn to prevent cuts due to hazards such as glass, shells or flints, or due to contact hazards on the craft.

## **DEFINITIONS FOR INLAND KAYAKING AND CANOEING FOR APPROVED CENTRES**

The Centre must normally employ a suitably experienced Level 3 Coach qualified for the type of craft and discipline concerned (ie kayak or canoe) who is the member of staff who has total responsibility for all canoeing activities, including the choosing of venues and their suitability, and informing Centre Managers/Directors of chosen location(s).

Under the authorisation of the Level 3 Coach, training sessions may be in the charge of instructors below that level under the following terms of reference.

### **VERY SHELTERED WATER**

*The definition involves:*

Quiet canals with easy bankside access and egress

Small lakes, which are not large enough, and do not have difficult landing areas, for problems to occur if there is a sudden change in conditions.

Specified sites on gentle, slow moving rivers

The definition implies weather conditions which are not in themselves likely to cause problems. Care must be exercised when water temperatures are low.

VERY SHELTERED WATERS are suitable for BCU Level 1 Coaches or Trainee Level 2 Coaches to control groups without being under the direct physical supervision of a Level 2 Coach or Level 3 Coach.

### **SHELTERED WATER**

*The definition involves:*

Flat water rivers, faster flowing, but not involving the shooting of, or playing on weirs, or running rapids

Lakes. Discretion and common sense must apply when considering the use of Lakes. To operate further than 200 yards from shore on a large lake can be a serious undertaking. To paddle in offshore breezes on large lakes requires the same degree of caution as for the sea. Water temperature (especially in Scottish Lochs) must always be a consideration. Suitable lagoons, or sections of sheltered bays, of large lakes can sometimes be designated 'Sheltered' or even 'Very Sheltered' water by careful and sensible selection.

The definition implies normal conditions. Care must be exercised when water temperatures are low.

SHELTERED WATER is suitable for BCU Level 2 Coaches to supervise groups. Trainee Level 2 Coaches may also operate in the same location only under the authorisation of a BCU Level 3 Coach.

*Other requirements*

For short, simple journeys a Level 2 Coach must be in charge, equipped in accordance with the requirements of the BCU 4 Star Test.

## **MODERATE INLAND WATER**

*The definition involves:*

Grade II white water, and equivalent weirs

Large Lakes

MODERATE Inland Water is suitable for BCU Level 3 Coaches in the relevant discipline (ie kayak, or canoe) to supervise groups.

*Other requirements*

Kayaks and canoes must be equipped with additional buoyancy. Kayakists must wear suitable helmets (see Appendix II) and for journeying be equipped in accordance with the requirements of the BCU 4 Star Test. In addition, the instructors must carry a throw line, and there should be sufficient spare paddles in the group.

## **ADVANCED INLAND WATER**

*The definition involves:*

Very Large Lakes

Grade III white water and above

Advanced white water or very large lakes require a BCU Level 3 Coach to be in charge, holding the 5 Star Certificate, or with relevant experience and ability.

*Other requirements for advanced white water*

Kayaks and canoes must be fitted with additional buoyancy. Suitable helmets must be worn and all participants equipped in accordance with the requirements of the BCU 5 Star Test. In addition, the instructors must carry a throw line, and there should be sufficient spare paddles in the group.

## **STAFF RATIOS - INLAND CANOEING**

The following staff ratios are suggested as ideal for the safety of students, where the quality of instruction and general safety and enjoyment of those participating, is important to the session. Safety factors are dependent upon a combination of the prevailing conditions, the ability of the group, and the purpose of the session. The person in charge of activities (normally an experienced Level 3) is the appropriate person to determine when these guidelines to be safely exceeded, or when lower limits should be applied. The Person in charge of activities should be allowed to exercise discretion based on his or her experience, but never put under pressure to accept greater numbers for commercial or similar reasons.

The following ratios are suggested for the purposes of **safety** and where quality of instruction is important to the session. Ratios are dependent upon a combination of the prevailing conditions, group control, environment and the behaviour and ability of the group.

**Very sheltered water** 1:8 (students)  
Level 1 Coach Open Canoes paddled solo 1:6

**Sheltered water** 1:8 (students)  
Level 2 Coach Open Canoes paddled solo 1:6  
1-12 Students when paddling double

**Moderate inland water** For journeys, the Level 3 Coach should be supported by \*competent paddlers on a ratio of about 1:6 students in accordance with conditions and the ability of the group.  
Level 3 coach  
Maximum size of group for journeys should be about 12 singles or 6 doubles (staff boats must be on a ratio of 1:6).  
Open Canoes: 1:5 Boats or 1:10 Students.

**Advanced inland water** For journeys, the Level 3 Coach, with 5 Star or equivalent ability and experience should be supported by \*competent paddlers, on a ratio of about 1:4 in accordance with conditions, and the ability of the group.  
Level 4 Coach  
Maximum size of group for journeys should be about 12 singles or 6 doubles (staff boats must be on a ratio of 1:4).

\*A competent paddler is a canoeist, or Coach under training, who is at home in the conditions likely to be encountered, and well able to undertake rescues and assist as necessary.

#### **Use Of Open Boats on Open Water:**

"On moderate water, the Sea or Large Lakes, it is the boat that is the limiting factor" Therefore as well as the leader having suitable experience and training beyond their level 3 award and have a good knowledge of their group, the boat must be suitably outfitted;

1. Sufficient buoyancy should be fitted to allow for the bailing of a swamped canoe.
2. Floating painters of at least half the canoe's length should be securely fitted to the body of the canoe at both ends.
3. Large bailers should be carried in each boat.
4. Canoes should carry poles and lashings sufficient to construct a secure raft.
5. Emergency Kit, according to the conditions should be carried and accessible.
6. A sea anchor of some description should be carried and coaches should have experience of its use.

Furthermore towing and rafting techniques and knowledge of a variety of both solo and group rescues must be rehearsed before commitment to Open Water.

## **DEFINITIONS FOR SEA KAYAKING FOR APPROVED CENTRES**

The sea is a very different environment from inland waters. It can easily ensnare the unwary, the uninitiated, or the careless, with its sometimes apparently tranquil appearance. It can change, often gradually and imperceptibly, at other times dramatically and suddenly, with devastating consequences. For these reasons the BCU has always operated a separate syllabus for awards for sea canoeing.

Centres must employ an experienced Level 3 Sea Coach who is the member of staff responsible for choosing kayak venues and their suitability for sea canoeing activities, and to inform Centre Managers/Directors of chosen location(s).

### **SHELTERED TIDAL WATERS**

*The definition involves:*

Small enclosed bays where there is minimal possibility of being blown offshore

Enclosed harbours where there is minimal possibility of being blown off shore

Defined beaches (a short section of beach with easy landing throughout, no tide races or overfalls, in conditions in which swimmers and beach craft could be happily operating) - winds not above force 3 (force 2 if offshore when the greatest of caution must be exercised)

The upper reaches of suitable, slow moving estuaries during Neap Tides

In all cases the wind and weather conditions must be favourable

SHELTERED TIDAL WATER areas are suitable for BCU Level 2 Kayak Coaches to supervise groups, or for BCU Trainee Level 2 Coaches to supervise groups when authorised by a Level 3 Coach.

*Other requirements*

Tow lines must be carried by Coaches or an appropriate deck mounted system should be in use, and a first aid kit and emergency equipment be available close at hand when operating away from the environs of the Centre.

### **MODERATE TIDAL WATER**

The definition involves:

a stretch of coastline or estuary in close proximity to the shore, with easy landing, not involving fast tidal streams, tidal races, or overfalls, winds not above force 3 (force 2 if offshore, when the greatest of caution must be

exercised). the upper reaches of some estuaries during Neap Tides.

It is recognised that as coaches progress through Level 3 Coach training towards Level 3 Coach assessment they will develop skills, knowledge, and experience that will increasingly equip them for taking greater responsibility for groups on the water.

It would not be outside the spirit of these guidelines for the person in charge of canoeing activities at a centre to use a Level 2 Coach to supervise general canoeing activities close inshore in moderate tidal water situations, providing all factors are taken into consideration such as: the nature of the location, the prevailing weather conditions, experience and ability of the group, experience and ability of the Level 2 Coach, and a considered evaluation of the risk. This, however, must be understood to be an operational judgment which can only be made, on the day, by an appropriately experienced and qualified (minimum Level 3 Sea Coach) member of staff.

## **ADVANCED SEA**

*The definition involves:*

Any journey on the sea where tidal races or overfalls may be encountered, which cannot be avoided.

Sections of coast line where difficult landings may be encountered or where landings may not be possible.

Difficult sea states and/or stronger winds (force 5 or above)

For ADVANCED SEA areas a Level 3 Sea Coach holding the 5 Star Certificate, or with equivalent experience and ability, is required to be in charge on the water.

## **STAFF RATIOS FOR SEA KAYAKING**

The following staff ratios are suggested as ideal for practical teaching purposes. BCU Level 2 Coaches and above are, however, trained to recognise when circumstances allow these guidelines to be safely exceeded, or when lower limits should be applied. The person in charge should always be allowed to exercise discretion.

### **Sheltered Tidal Waters 1:8 (students)**

Level 2 Coach

#### **Moderate Sea**

Level 3 Sea coach

For journeying along a stretch of coastline or estuary in relatively close proximity to the shore, with easy landing, not involving tidal races or overfalls, winds not above force 4, a Level 3 Sea Coach should be in charge supported by competent paddlers\* on a ratio of about 1:6 students in accordance with the conditions and the ability of the group.

#### **Advanced Sea**

Level 4 Sea Coach

For journeys, a Level 3 Sea Coach with 5 Star, or equivalent ability and experience should be sup

ported by \*competent paddlers on a ratio of about 1:4 in accordance with conditions, and the ability of the group.

\*A competent paddler may be a canoeist, or instructor under training, who is at home in the conditions likely to be encountered, and well able to undertake rescues and assist as necessary. If there is a necessity to split the group, or a possibility that adverse conditions could make this likely, the supporting paddler must hold the relevant qualification.

### **SIZE OF PARTY**

Large fleets of kayaks on the sea should be avoided - groups of 6-8 are ideal.

### **JOURNEYING ON THE SEA - other requirements**

Buoyancy Aids or Life Jackets must always be worn.

All kayaks must have the telephone number of the Centre marked on or in them, and comply with BCU recommendations.

Kayaks must be fitted with suitable foot rests, and all the group must wear spray decks.

Kayaks must possess maximum buoyancy (single pillar buoyancy should be supplemented with air bags and or self contained waterproof hatches).

Bow and stern toggles are essential, as are adequate spray decks. Deck lines, when fitted, must be taut and not able to foul the cockpit area.

Each member of the group should carry all the equipment listed in the BCU 4 Star Sea test syllabus, and a suitable means of pin-pointing one's position when in the water. At the discretion of the leader, taking into account the type of group involved, and the nature of the journey being tackled, a hand held flare may be appropriate.

Spare split paddles carried by other persons in the group is also suggested. These may be in the boats, but should be easily accessible.

2 parachute flares and two hand-held flares must be carried by the leader. Tow lines must be carried by all instructors and/or supporters.

### **Use of escort boats.**

The use of safety boats does not extend the operating remits of the coach and his/her qualifications. Safety boats are therefore seen as an added safety element and not a means of placing Coaches and groups outside their standard operational remit.

### **INFORMING HM COASTGUARD**

A BASE LEADER must be appointed who is acquainted with the itinerary, and has access to full details of the names of all involved, types of kayak used, and the emergency equipment carried.

JOURNEY LEADER must inform HM Coastguard by telephone of group numbers and itinerary and update Base Leader at the Centre if plans are changed.

**If group is overdue, Base Leader is responsible for raising the alarm**

**and must not go off duty until the group is accounted for.** HM Coastguard to be informed as soon as practicable on completion of journey.

The coastguard should be informed of activities on the sea, the information you log with them is a valuable tool in the effective operation of their service. It is in liaison with the coastguard relevant to the area of operation as to whether it is on a daily basis or on a more needs must arrangement i.e. a change in format from the standard session (more capsizes or offshore work).

Centres must conform with the BCU/HM Coastguard 'code of safe practice'.

## **DEFINITIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SURFING FOR APPROVED CENTRES USING KAYAKS OR SIT-ONS**

The Centre must employ a **Level 3 Surf Coach** who must give authorisation for each and every session, having regard to the prevailing wind and wave conditions, and the competence of those running the session.

It is recommended that coaches gain the appropriate water based lifesaving qualification for operating in the surf i.e. RLSS Beach Lifeguard/SLSA Surf Lifesaving Award.

### **MEASUREMENT OF SURF**

The 'surfers' measurement is used throughout both this document and the BCU awards in surf. The surf forecast obtained from 'telephone surf lines' the internet or wave buoys is in feet and refers to the rideable mid section of the wave, not the peak to trough height. As a bench mark 'four feet' is head height for a board surfer and on an average British beach break would provide conditions only suitable for the most experienced and capable kayaker surfer.

A swell of 'six inches' to 'one foot' is both appropriate and more than adequate for any novice group; intermediate kayak surfers would find 'two feet' of surf more than suitable for a learning experience.

### **WAVE CHARACTER**

The physical height of a wave is only part of the picture. The following factors all individually have a profound effect on a wave but combined can change swells dramatically.

- Wind direction and strength
- Beach shape
- Type of break
- State, height and phase of the tide
- Swell character (age/speed)

### **OTHER FACTORS**

- Air and Sea temperature
- Other water users
- Sewage

All of these contrive to make **ONE FOOT** of swell a potentially serious and dangerous environment to take inexperienced client groups into. The centre through the decisions and presence at the surf site of at least a **'level Three Surf coach'** must ensure the apparatus for collecting sufficient information on the prevailing surf, tide and weather conditions is available and accessed. It is also essential that other staff involved in running or supporting any sessions are aware of any potentially dangerous conditions either present or predicted during the session duration; the sea is not a stable environment.

Although the current awards give the Level Three surf coach a remit to operate in up to 'three feet' of surf, it would be very unusual indeed if anything but expert groups were taken into such conditions, although if appropriate the 'reform or secondary break' might prove a suitable site for inexperienced or novice groups to work.

**STAFF RATIOS**

<u>UP TO 'THREE FEET'</u>	1 - 8 students	L3 SURF COACH
	8 - 16 students	L3 SURF COACH + TRAINEE L3 SURF COACH
<u>ABOVE 'THREE FEET'</u>	8 - 16 students	L3 SURF COACH with 5 STAR SURF + TRAINEE L3 SURF COACH

**THE CRAFT**

All craft, of whatever type, should be clearly marked with the phone number and ideally the name of the operator so that in the event of a boat being found adrift the owner can be easily contacted and any need for search and rescue rapidly established.

All craft should be free of sharp or rough edges and should not have sharply pointed ends (also see Appendix I)

**Kayaks.**

Adequate pillar buoyancy must be permanently fixed in to the Kayak.

Additional air bags should be used each side of rear pillars.

A bulkheaded or failsafe footrest must be provided to fit each individual. The space in front of the footrest should be fitted with fixed buoyancy so that it cannot be passed in the event of a beach 'loop'.

End grabs at each end of the kayak need to be easy to hold on to. Loops should not be used because of the danger of finger entrapment.

Paddles must be of a suitable type and size for the participants, and be of

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End grabs at each end of the kayak need to be easy to hold on to. Loops should not be used because of the danger of finger entrapment.

Paddles must be of a suitable type and size for the participants, and be of strong construction suitable for the forces involved.

### **Wave skis.**

Foot straps should be adjusted so that the whole foot cannot pass through the strap and cause ankle entrapment.

Ankle leashes must be in good condition and their use explained at the start of the session.

Lap belts must have a simple cam action quick release which operates smoothly, and **must not be fastened until the student has practised releasing in an emergency, under direct supervision, and achieved a consistent and confident release.** (*Warning:* Cags can ride up over the release buckle on ski straps). Metal parts must be inspected for rusting and/or to check smooth release action.

## EQUIPMENT

Spare safety craft. Consideration should be given to the need for a kayak specifically equipped for surf rescue i.e. swimmers grab lines and towing systems etc.

Instructors must carry towlines and a 20m throwline.

First aid kit and survival bag, together with means of providing shelter and a hot drink unless operating from close to base.

Audible alarm signal - whistle or air horn - for attracting attention in an emergency.

Both air and water temperatures should be considered. Sea water temperatures are normally low in the United Kingdom, especially between November and May.

Participants must be instructed to capsized their craft if a collision appears likely - both parties.

The group should be split into 'buddy' pairs and informed of their responsibility to each other. A simple signalling system should be established, particularly to indicate if help is required, and when to come immediately to shore.

An instructor, capable of competently operating the rescue craft, must remain on the beach as a spotter to ensure that all the party is safe.

## Appendix I

### CANOE AND KAYAK FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

The British Standards Institution has approved a Code of Practice for Canoe Construction, and a Recommendation for Safety Features in Canoes. The code states "There is no such thing as a 'safe' canoe or kayak. There can only be a safe canoeist. His or her safety is only ensured by good training and experience and the avoidance of unnecessary risks"

The specific safety recommendations are:

#### **Buoyancy**

- 1.1 Each canoe or kayak shall be fitted with positive buoyancy so placed that the boat, when full of water but with no canoeist inside, will float at an angle of no more than 3 degrees when a 6.5kg lead weight is suspended from each end.
- 1.2 Closed-cell foam buoyancy shall be securely fixed. NOTE: Closed-cell foam buoyancy may be positioned to add to the structural strength of the canoe.
- 1.3 Water exclusion buoyancy employing sealed compartments shall only be used if sufficient closed cell foam buoyancy is provided to meet the requirements of 1.1, or if facilities are provided to permit removal of water seepage.
- 1.4 Provision shall be made on buoyancy air-bags to allow them to be tied in position.
- 1.5 When considering the buoyancy placed within boats it is important to bear in mind that additional buoyancy is preferable when boats are being used in white water and open water situations. Additional buoyancy in such situations allows boats to float higher in the water and therefore less vulnerable to entrapment and easier to rescue.

It should be remembered that additional buoyancy, can at all times and in all situations ease the safe handling issues related to rescue situations

#### **Footrests**

- 2.1 A footrest shall be provided for closed cockpit kayaks when used on white water or surf, as specified in 2.2 or 2.3.
- 2.2 Platform footrests in closed-cockpit kayaks shall not, in any position, permit the canoeists feet to pass forward of the footrest. The footrest shall be rigidly fixed and be incapable of rotation on its mounting.
- 2.3 Bar type footrests in closed-cockpit kayaks shall be designed to allow canoeists to withdraw their feet or legs if they pass the bar. In practice this means that the bar shall be of 'fail safe' design, ie. rigid when the canoeists' feet are pressed against it in the normal paddling position, but capable of swinging or falling clear of the canoeists' feet if they pass beyond the bar.

#### **End Grabs**

(The figures in brackets indicate the diameter of rope recommended for kayaks when used on white water)

- 3.1 The canoe or kayak shall be fitted at each end with end loops, end toggles or handles, to provide handholds. Handholds shall be attached within 50cm of the extremities.
- 3.2 Where end loops < are fitted, rot-proof rope of not less than 8mm diameter shall be used. The loop shall allow all four fingers of the hand to pass through.

- 3.3 Where end toggles are fitted, each end toggle shall be secured by a short length of rope, suitably rot-proofed, with a minimum diameter of 4mm (6mm) and a length of between 50mm and 200mm, fitted at its unattached end with a toggle at least 75mm long and a diameter of at least 20mm, made of a material that can withstand exposure to sea water without deteriorating.
- 3.4 Where handles are fitted, they shall have two separate anchor points which allow all four fingers of the hand to pass, and the grasp shall not be less than 6mm (10mm) in diameter.

### **Painters and Deck-Lines**

- 4.1 Where a painter is fitted, or where provision for the attachment of a painter is incorporated, a suitable fitting shall be provided to secure the free end of the painter. A painter shall not pass around the cockpit rim.
- 4.2 Where deck lines are fitted, they shall be taut and shall be secured to remain free from the cockpit area of a closed-cockpit canoe or kayak.
- 4.3 Painters and deck-lines shall be rot-proof and not less than 8mm diameter.

### **Colour**

To assist in detection, the deck or hull of sea kayaks should be finished predominantly in red, orange or yellow of high visibility.

End loops are not recommended for boats used on white water or in surf due to the danger of fingers becoming entrapped should the canoe or kayak rotate in a "stopper" or on a surf wave.

### **Appendix II**

#### **WHITE WATER RAFTING**

A Code of Conduct for the supervision of white water rafting is available from the BCU office.

### **Appendix III**

#### **DRAGON BOATING**

Canoeing Instructors are not automatically qualified to supervise Dragon Boating.

Information concerning the supervision of Dragon Boating is available from the Dragon Boating Association Chairman, Mike Haslam, 44 Bassaleg Road, Newport, Gwent. NP9 3EA.

### **Appendix IV**

#### **SAFETY HELMETS**

##### **BCU Guidance Note**

The attention of BCU approved centres is drawn to the following policy statement determined by the BCU Council:

'Where safety helmets are considered to be necessary for an event or activity, or where they are required to be worn by the competition rules, they must conform to the following:

Safety helmets must have a hard, strong, outer shell, and provide protection close to the eyebrows and ears and well down towards the neck at the back of the head. The helmet must incorporate a shock absorbing liner of suitable foam. It must fit the head well, and must not easily pull up and backwards, exposing the forehead'.

**Explanatory note:** The use of the word 'necessary' in the above, should be noted. Many centres put helmets on novices for initial training on flat water. This is not stated in BCU guidelines as a requirement, however. Helmets not conforming to the above would, therefore, still be useable in that context.

