Level 3: Coastal Kayaking
Skills Assessment

Assessment Overview: This ACA Assessment Course is designed to evaluate a participant's ability to perform all of the skills listed along with demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge. This assessment course provides the participant with the opportunity to receive documentation of having achieved a certain level of paddling ability. It is expected that participants interested in pursuing this award will have participated in a minimum of three, full day journeys e.g. longer than 8 nautical miles.

Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):
ACA courses are open to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
3. Independently hold head upright without neck / head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket*
8. Get on / off or in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft*
10. Remount or reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
11. Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities and rescues listed in the appropriate Course Outline, and have the ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation*

** To participate in adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve teaching and practicing EEC #7-11.*

Course Prerequisites: Must be an ACA member

Course Duration: This assessment is intended to be accomplished in a single day; however, it may be conducted over a longer period of time at the assessor's discretion.

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Course Location / Venue: The L3: Coastal Kayak Assessment cannot be completed unless 2 of the following conditions necessary for assessment are present:

- 10-15 knot winds
- 1-2 foot seas (0.3 – 0.6 meters)
- 1-2 foot breaking waves (0.3 - 0.6 meters)
- Note: If assessing in areas with tidal current, current must not exceed 2 knots.

Assessor: Level 3: Coastal Kayaking Instructor (or higher)

Class Ratio: 5 students : 1 Instructor; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 10 : 2

Succeeding courses: Level 3: Coastal Kayak Instructor IDW
Level 3: Coastal Kayak Trip Leading Training Course
Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayaking Skills Assessment

Equipment: Candidates shall come prepared to manage themselves on a day-long trip. The following is a list of required items:

- General purpose, touring or sea kayak equipped with floatation and/or bulkheads and static deck lines
- Personal paddling equipment to include: U. S. Coast Guard approved, and sport specific, lifejacket (PFD), well-fitted spray deck, paddle, whistle, spare clothing, hiker's compass and paddling clothing suitable for immersion and appropriate to the conditions.
- Food and water for the day
- Any additional items that may be required on the water

Introduction, Expectations, & Logistics

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork
- Student & instructor course expectations and limitations
- Explain assessment procedure
- Course itinerary & site logistics
- Review waiver, assumption of risk, challenge by choice, medical disclosure
- About the ACA
- PFD policy (always wear on water)
- Appropriate personal behavior
- No alcohol / substance abuse
- Proper etiquette on & off the water
- Respect private property
- Practice Leave No Trace ethics

Assessment: Candidates will be assessed in two areas: Technical skills and knowledge.

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Technical Skills

- Effective wet exit
- Launching and landing
- Effective forward paddling
- Effective reverse paddling
- Rotate 360˚
- Turning with forward momentum
- Turning with reverse momentum
- Sideways movement—static
- Sideways movement with forward momentum
- Preventing capsize
- Sculling for support
- Deep water rescue
- Self-rescue
- Towing
- Rescues

Knowledge

- Weather (knowledge of weather resources and the impact of weather on kayakers)
- Basic navigation (interpret basic chart datum, plotting a course and adjusting for variation)
- Leave No Trace skills and ethics
- Group awareness and communication
- Hazard assessment and avoidance
- Recognition and avoidance of hypothermia and hyperthermia

Conclusion & Wrap Up:

- Group debrief / individual feedback
- Course limitations
- Importance of first aid & CPR
- Importance of additional instruction, learning to roll, other succeeding courses, practice, experience
- Importance of appropriate level of safety & rescue training
- Life sport / paddling options
- Local paddling groups / clubs
- Handouts / reference materials
- ACA membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Assessment cards (if applicable)

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Participant: _____ **ACA #** _____ **Date:** _____

Location and venue:

_____

Rating: ***✓ = Passing N = Needs more practice***

Technical Skills: Participant must be able to demonstrate each of the technical skills in a safe, effective and efficient manner in L3 conditions. The focus of the assessment will be on achieving desired results in context rather than on specific technique, i.e., while performing authentic tasks in conditions.

TECHNICAL SKILLS	P / N	COMMENTS
Effective wet exit—demonstrate a controlled wet exit with spray deck in L3 conditions.		
Effective launching and landing—demonstrate launching and landing in a variety of contexts.		
Effective forward paddling—demonstrate the ability to maintain directional stability through a variety of techniques and maintain speed appropriate to the environment while paddling forward.		
Effective reverse paddling—demonstrate the ability to maintain directional stability while paddling in reverse.		
Rotate 360°—spin their kayak using edge and combined forward and reverse sweeps.		
Turning with forward momentum—demonstrate the ability to turn their kayak with a variety of techniques with forward momentum to include: edging, bow rudders, stern rudder (to go straight) stern draw, stern pry and low brace turn.		
Turning with reverse momentum—demonstrate the ability to turn their kayak with their kayak moving in reverse.		
Sideways movement, static—demonstrate sideways movement using draw to the hip and sculling draw.		
Sideways movement with forward momentum—demonstrate sideways movement with forward momentum using a draw on the move or hanging draw.		
Preventing capsize—demonstrate the ability to prevent capsize using low and high braces in a variety of contexts.		
Sculling for support—effectively and efficiently scull for support.		

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Deep water rescue—demonstrate a variety of rescues in L3 conditions.		
Self-rescue—demonstrate the ability to successfully self-rescue in conditions using the technique of their choice. If a device is required, such as a paddle float, then must be able to access, deploy, and re-store the device in a timely fashion.		
Towing—demonstrate proficiency in a variety of towing techniques to include: contact tows, rafted tows, inline tows, towing/carrying a swimmer, etc.		
Rescue—demonstrate proficiency with both boat and paddle presentation and demonstrate confidence as the victim.		
Provide evidence of at least three day-trips of at least 8 nautical miles		

Knowledge: An individual's knowledge shall be assessed using a variety of methods that may include: Observation, self-assessment, feedback, and questioning.

KNOWLEDGE	P / N	COMMENTS
Weather—able to explain the effect of weather on kayakers and show knowledge of various weather resources.		
Basic navigation—able to interpret basic chart datum, plot a course and adjust for variation.		
Leave No Trace (LNT) skills and ethics—possesses a fundamental knowledge of Leave No Trace (LNT) skills and ethics.		
Group awareness and communication—demonstrate an understanding and proper use of on water signals and the importance of maintaining a small group profile.		
Hazard assessment and avoidance—demonstrate an understanding of hazard assessment, and avoidance of same, both on and off the water.		
Recognition and avoidance of hypothermia and hyperthermia—demonstrate an understanding of the causes and prevention of both hyperthermia and hypothermia.		

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FINAL ASSESSMENT		COMMENTS
PASS	NEEDS MORE WORK	
ASSESSOR		
Assessor must be a currently certified ACA Instructor at or above this level. Assessor: _____ Signature: _____ ACA #: _____ Date: _____ Assisting IT or Instructor: _____ ACA #: _____		

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