



QSKC Policy: Club Grading System

Introduction

This grading system is provided for member's benefit, describing a clear set of parameters designed to:

1. Assist participants to self assess their suitability for the easier Club Events
2. Illustrate Club Policy for the more difficult Club Events.

Through inspection of the grading system and discussion with the particular Trip Leaders, prospective paddlers should determine whether they and their equipment meet the participation requirements. The emphasis is upon self-regulation however the trip leader retains the right to enforce Club Policy.

Note:

- Attendance to all Club Events, must be confirmed as directed, by the notification for each event
- All Graded Club Events will be cancelled from the Club's program if a strong wind warning has been issued
- Trip Leader to Participant Ratio (Refer AC Safety Guidelines May 2008):
 - 1:6/1:8 at sea, depending on conditions and skill level of participants & leader
 - 1:2 on remote trips with a committing shoreline and surf over 1 metre
 - 1:10 if conditions are forecast stable and paddling close to shore/all participants can roll/self rescue.

Definitions

Member: Any current fully financial member of the Queensland Sea Kayak Club Inc (QSKC).

Prospective Member/Visitor Policy: A visitor can take part in a maximum of 3 activities under the QSKC Visitor policy (any grade at Trip Leader's discretion). The participant must sign the comprehensive indemnity waiver and must pay \$5.50 per adult per session attended.

AC Insurance FAQ's:

<http://www.canoe.org.au/site/canoeing/ac/downloads/insurance/Australian%20Canoeing%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%202007%2008.pdf>

Club Event: Any event, paddle, activity scheduled by the QSKC. (Generally posted on the QSKC Web Site events calendar - In the Club newsletter - Or notified via QSKC e-mail.)

Trip Leader: Person or persons duly authorised by the Club, to lead a Club Event.

Sea Leader: Person who holds the Sea Leaders qualification recognised by Australian Canoeing.

Sea Guide: Person who holds the Sea Guide qualifications recognised by Australian canoeing.

Equipment: All relevant items recommended, required or utilised by a person participating in a Club Event.

Grade 1

Description

- Open to members and visitors (at Trip Leader's discretion)
- Paddling in sheltered inshore waters such as the Broadwater, with seas up to 0.5m, 0m surf, with safe launching/landing points
- Paddling up to 15km per day
- Maintain a cruising speed of up to 4km/hour.

Equipment Prerequisites

Required equipment

- Kayak with fitted deck lines and spray skirt
- Australian or NZ Standards approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) with a suitable whistle attached by lanyard
- Sponge/ bailer
- At least one litre of water.

Recommended equipment

- Sun-protective clothing & sunscreen
- Footwear suitable for paddling, swimming and walking on rocks
- Nourishment for the duration of the trip.

Paddlers Requirements

- For beginners with some paddling experience
- Paddlers should have an appropriate level of fitness, which will enable them to safely paddle up to 15km per day and be able to swim 10m wearing a pfd.
- Individuals must self assess their, and their equipment's, ability to participate in this level Club Event and should consult the trip leader if any aspect of their suitability requires clarification.

Trip Leaders Requirements

- Equipment as per Grade 1 Equipment Prerequisites plus, provide a suitable means of emergency communication, first aid kit, spare paddle, tow rope and must implement the event in accordance with Club Float Plan
- Skill requirements to be proven by holding existing approved certification, or by successfully completing the QSKC Grade 1 Trip Leader Training Day.

Grade 1.5

Description

- Open to members and visitors (at Trip Leader's discretion)
- In sheltered inshore waters such as the Broadwater, with seas up to 0.5m, 0m surf, with safe launching/landing points
- Paddling 15 – 20km per day
- Maintain a cruising speed of up to 5km/hour.

Equipment Prerequisites

Required equipment

- Kayak with fitted deck lines and spray skirt
- Australian or NZ Standards approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) with a suitable whistle attached by lanyard
- Sponge/ bailer
- At least one litre of water
- Towline
- Spray skirt.

Recommended equipment

- Sun-protective clothing & sunscreen
- Footwear suitable for paddling, swimming and walking on rocks
- Nourishment for the duration of the trip
- Paddle leash.

Paddlers Requirements

- For paddlers with some experience, not suitable for beginners
- Paddlers should have an appropriate level of fitness, which will enable them to safely paddle 15 – 20km per day, handle choppy conditions and be able to swim 15m wearing a pfd.
- Individuals must self assess their, and their equipment's, ability to participate in this level Club Event and should consult the trip leader if any aspect of their suitability requires clarification.

Trip Leaders Requirements

- Equipment as per Grade 2 Equipment Prerequisites plus, provide a suitable means of emergency communication, first aid kit, spare paddle, tow rope and must implement the event in accordance with Club Float Plan;
- Skill requirements to be proven by holding existing approved certification, or an experienced Grade 1 Trip Leader endorsed by the QSKC Committee.

Grade 2

Description

- Open to members and visitors (at Trip Leader’s discretion) in semi-protected waters, such as Moreton Bay
- Seas to 1m and surf to 0.5m
- Paddling up to 20km per day in sea like conditions
- Maintain a cruising speed of up to 5km/hour.

Equipment Prerequisites

Required equipment

- Well maintained, sea-kayak with at least 2 bulkheads and fitted deck lines
- Australian or NZ Standards approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) with a suitable whistle attached by a lanyard
- Spray skirt
- Tow line
- Paddle leash
- Sponge, bailer and/or pump
- At least two litres of water.

Recommended equipment

- Footwear suitable for paddling, swimming and walking on rocks
- Cag or paddle jacket, warm clothing, sun-protective clothing, hat and sunscreen
- Nourishment for the duration of the trip.

Paddlers Requirements

- Paddlers should have some skills including assisted rescue, bracing, towing, entry & exit through small surf
- Conditions may require using the paddle to stern rudder
- Some familiarity with charts and navigation is desired
- Individuals must self assess their, and their equipment’s, ability to participate in this level Club Event and should consult the trip leader if any aspect of their suitability requires clarification
- Paddlers should be able to swim 20m wearing a pfd
- Paddle up to 20km per day with frequent breaks and at least 1 stop during the paddle.

Trip Leaders Requirements

- Equipment as per Grade 2 Equipment Prerequisites plus, provide a suitable means of emergency communication, first aid kit, spare paddle and must implement the event in accordance with Club Float Plan
- Grade 2 Trip Leaders should have a Sea Skills qualification or equivalent
- The equivalence may be applicable to candidates with extensive sea kayaking experience and demonstrated skills in leadership, paddling and rescue techniques
- A dispensation from the formal Sea Skills qualification may be issued by QSKC to prospective trip leaders fulfilling the described criteria.

Grade 2.5

Description

- Open to experienced members and visitors (at Trip Leader's discretion) in open waters, with seas to 2m and surf to 1m
- These events may require launching and landing through the surf with some time spent in the surf zone (e.g. paddling on the surf side of South Stradbroke Island, when the seas meet the specified sea and surf criteria)
- Paddling up to 25km per day, partially along some open surf beaches
- Maintain a cruising speed of up to 6km/hour.

Equipment Prerequisites

Required equipment

- Well maintained sea kayak with at least 2 bulkheads and fitted deck lines
- Australian or NZ Standards approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) with a suitable whistle attached by a lanyard
- Spare paddle, first aid kit, emergency lighting & duct tape/or equivalent
- Spray skirt
- Tow line
- Paddle leash
- Sponge, bailer and/or pump
- At least two litres of water.

Recommended equipment

- Footwear suitable for paddling, swimming and walking on rocks
- Cag or paddle jacket, warm clothing, sun-protective clothing, hat and sunscreen
- Nourishment for the duration of the trip.

Paddlers Requirements

- Paddlers must have tested their skills in rough conditions (i.e. up to 2m seas), know their limits and be self-reliant
- The ability to Eskimo roll is not required but would be preferred
- Paddlers need to be able to self-rescue reliably and quickly in rough conditions
- Paddlers need to be able to swim 20m in choppy conditions wearing a pfd
- QSKC will conduct training days covering skills, such as surf negotiation and rescues relevant to Grade 2.5 Club paddles. If your skills in this area have not been demonstrated to the Club, it is required that you attend one of these days to validate your skills and safety awareness. Or participate in, at the same venue a tutorial covering the basic skills and responsibilities involved in Grade 2.5 paddles.

Trip Leaders Requirements

- Equipment as per Grade 2.5 Equipment Prerequisites plus, provide a suitable means of emergency communication and must implement the event in accordance with Club Float Plan
- Trip Leaders must hold a minimum of Sea Leader qualifications and be authorised by QSKC. Inc.

Grade 3

Description

- Open to qualified members and visitors (at Trip Leader's discretion) in open waters, seas to 2.5m and surf to 1.5m
- These paddles may require launching and landing through the surf with some time spent in the surf zone
- Paddling up to 30km per day along open coastlines and rocky headlands
- Maintain a cruising speed of 6 km/hour.

Equipment Prerequisites

Required equipment

- Well maintained sea kayak with at least 2 bulkheads and fitted deck lines
- Australian or NZ Standards approved Personal Flotation Device (PFD) with a suitable whistle attached by a lanyard
- Cag or paddle jacket, warm clothing, sun-protective clothing, hat and sunscreen, all accessible from the cockpit
- Footwear suitable for paddling, swimming and walking on rocks
- Spare Paddle, First Aid Kit, Space blanket Emergency Lighting & Duct Tape/or equivalent
- Spray skirt
- Tow line
- Paddle leash
- Sponge, bailer and hands-free bailing pump system (i.e. electric or foot pump)
- At least two litres of water
- Emergency food.

Recommended equipment

- Compass and charts
- EPIRB
- VHF radio
- Flares & V-sheet
- Signal mirror
- Knife.

Paddlers Requirements

- For proficient paddlers holding Australian Canoeing Sea Skills Award
- Extensive experience and skill including kayak surfing and Eskimo rolling are required.

Trip Leaders Requirements

- Equipment as per Grade 3 Equipment Prerequisites plus, provide a suitable means of emergency communication and must implement the event in accordance with Club Float Plan
- Trip Leaders must hold a minimum of Sea Guide qualifications and be authorised by QSKC. Inc.