

# Paddle Australia Qualification Scheme

## Assessment Guidelines

### Flatwater Guide - SOT



## Qualification Definition

The holder of this award is qualified to guide groups of novices on activity and day based programs on Flatwater areas such as lakes, dams, slow moving rivers, etc. An area should **not** be classified as Flatwater if any of the following apply:

- Rapids of any grade
- Surf (of any size) entry or exit
- An entrance structure to an estuary or embayment
- Affected by swell
- Documented tidal rips (see chart)
- Documented tidal current greater than 1 knot (see chart)
- Where the tide (rise or fall) removes a landing area or makes it unsuitable
- Distances greater than 400 metres from shore
- Fetch greater than 1 nautical mile

The assessment can be conducted on single or double SOTs. If using a double SOT the candidate should be tested in both the bow and stern positions.

## Skills

<b>Prepare appropriate craft and equipment</b>	Throughout assessment participants use appropriate equipment for the environment. This equipment promotes personal safety and is prepared in a way to not impede on safety
<b>Secure craft for transport, secure equipment to craft</b>	Participants transport craft to and from venue, method is safe for craft and participant. (or able to demonstrate method they would use) Equipment placed on craft is secured in a manner that does not impede safety and is accessible when required
<b>Launch and land craft</b>	Participant launches and lands craft in a safe repeatable manner without assistance
<b>Perform paddle strokes</b>	Demonstrate individual strokes to manoeuvre the craft: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Forward and reverse paddle</li><li>• Forward and reverse sweeps</li><li>• Draw strokes (feathered and sculling)</li><li>• Stern rudder</li><li>• Bow rudder</li><li>• Stopping</li><li>• Support using back of blade</li></ul> For each stroke the minimum performance requirements are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Correct hand placement on paddle</li><li>• Sufficient wrist movement to enable correct blade placement</li><li>• Adequate paddle depth in water to achieve effective stroke</li><li>• Correct paddle blade angle throughout stroke</li><li>• Correct paddle entry and exit points with respect to craft and body position</li></ul>
<b>Form into and disperse</b>	A raft is formed in a timely manner (no wasted time) and

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from a raft	promotes safety to all involved
<b>Perform self and buddy rescues</b>	<p>Self rescue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swim craft 50m in paddling gear</li> <li>• Capsize and re-mount</li> <li>• Paddle float re-entry</li> </ul> <p>Buddy rescue (rescues are performed as rescuee and rescuer):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flip and hold</li> </ul> <p>Rescues are performed in a timely manner (no time wasted) and promotes safety to all involved and is deemed to work in all conditions</p>
<b>Accept a tow</b>	<p>Calm is maintained.</p> <p>Craft kept in a straight line while towed.</p> <p>Craft kept stable and balanced</p>
<b>Perform a tow</b>	<p>Demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single tow</li> <li>• Contact tow</li> </ul> <p>Tows are performed using quick release system that floats if disconnected.</p> <p>Tows are performed to promote safety to all.</p>
<b>Complete an activity</b>	<p>Activity plan/brief is followed to meet time management requirements and activity goals. Plan is adjusted if and when required</p>
<b>Rope work</b>	<p>Demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bowline</li> <li>• Fisherman's knot</li> <li>• Round turn and two half hitches</li> <li>• Clove hitch</li> <li>• Highwayman's hitch</li> <li>• Truckies hitch</li> </ul>
<b>Individual Situational Awareness</b>	<p>Participant is able to monitor personal wellbeing as well as environmental elements that may effect all participants</p>
<b>Apply paddle strokes</b>	<p>Demonstrate combinations of the above strokes to manoeuvre the craft effectively and efficiently</p>
<b>Group Situational Awareness</b>	<p>Group and environment are monitored to ensure activity remains safe and enjoyable for all participants.</p> <p>Monitoring may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatigue</li> <li>• Separation</li> <li>• Sickness</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Tide</li> <li>• Weather</li> <li>• Other environmental influences</li> </ul>

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## Knowledge

Group participants: Novice paddlers

### Knowledge and maintenance of craft

Good knowledge of what makes a craft suitable for Flatwater. Must include but not limited to:

- Construction
- Material
- Flotation
- Water line
- Handling characteristics
- Grab handles
- Foot support

### Select and advise on appropriate equipment and clothing

Clothing and equipment is selected with consideration of sun sense and other environmental influences  
Throughout assessment participants use appropriate equipment for the environment and are monitored and reminded of appropriate precautions.  
This equipment is prepared in a way to not impede on safety

### Store, operate and maintain appropriate safety and communication equipment

Equipment to include but not limited to:

- Lifejacket (level 50)
- Sufficient food and water
- Spare paddle
- Mobile phone
- Hand pump
- VHF radio
- Tow line
- Sat Phone
- Sling/rescue ladder
- Pea-less whistle
- PLB
- Safety knife
- First Aid kit
- Paddle float

Able to show or explain simple repair kit and the purpose of contents

### Navigational aids

Knowledge of but not limited to:

- Latitude and Longitude/Grid reference
- Measuring distance
- Scale
- Navigational markers: Lateral, cardinal and special markers
- Tidal flow arrows
- Paddling speed
- Position fixing; e.g. dead reckoning, 3 point fix
- Aiming off
- Contour lines
- Land features such as Spur, Ridge, Saddle, Gully, Knoll, and Plateau

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- Tides: High, Low, Spring, Neap, Tidal range, Rule of twelves, Secondary ports
- Able to complete a Navigation sheet

#### Interpret weather

Able to gain appropriate Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) weather forecasts (e.g. from MetEye) and warnings, and interpret how weather can influence and affect a paddling location.

Knowledge of, but not limited to:

- Winds
- Beaufort Scale
- Funnelling
- Fetch
- Effects of wind on paddling; windward, leeward
- Tidal currents
- Precipitation
- Sources of extended marine weather forecasts
- Telling signs of bad weather approaching

#### Plan an activity

Plan is developed to meet the activity goals and is appropriate for group, location and time limitation. Plan allows for all capabilities within the group and contains contingency plans for equipment failure and emergency evacuation

#### Minimal environmental impact

Follows PA [Minimal Impact Guidelines](#)

#### Maintain a log book

Understands the purpose and contents of a log book  
Knowledge and use of PA's **Paddle Log** app

#### Prepare a Float Plan

Understands the purpose and contents of a Float Plan  
Knowledge and use of PA's **Paddle Prep** app

#### Selection of launching and landing sites

Understands the issues when selecting an appropriate launching and landing site to be safe for the group

#### PA's role, membership structure, your rights and responsibilities

Understands PA's membership, structure and rights and responsibilities as a registered PA leader

#### PA's relevant guidelines and policies

Has knowledge of the safe conduct of recreational paddling as described in PA's [Safety Guidelines](#)

#### Hazard identification and risk management

Able to identify risks and causal factors for a Flatwater activity and also able to identify management strategies to mitigate any risks.

Risks may include:

- Separation
- Drowning
- Sunburn
- Hypothermia
- Hyperthermia

#### Licensing, permits, legal

Able to give examples of any Licensing, Permits and other legal

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matters

and behavioural laws and requirements that may be required for an activity

## Communication

*Group participants: Novice paddlers*

**Establish and maintain an effective communication system within a group**

Participant establishes a safe working system. Maintain group within communication distance. Communication is limited to Verbal, Whistle, Visual.  
Communicate in a positive manner within a paddling group to help establish and maintain an enjoyable, safe experience for all group members  
Deliver directions in a clear and concise manner

**Conduct briefing**

Brief must include but not limited to:

- Purpose and duration of activity
- Expected conditions
- Lifejacket fitting
- Appropriate clothing worn
- Correct posture
- Setting up the craft
- Launching and landing
- Strokes as required
- Limits
- Actions in the event of an emergency
- On water signals
- Capsize drill
- Warm up
- Group movement requirements
- Communication
- Foreseeable risks
- Participant experience

Brief is clear and concise, attention of the group is gained. Recollection could be tested.

**Conduct debriefing**

A debrief is conducted to suit the activity and group. Constructive feedback is provided

## Experience

**Minimum log book requirement**

In the previous three years:

- Five Flatwater trips of a minimum of three hours duration
- Three Flatwater activities of at least three hours duration as an observer under training or as an assistant Guide
- Three Flatwater activities of at least three hours duration as lead Guide under observation of qualified Guide

## Leadership

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<b>Manage the launching and landing of a group</b>	Launch and landing promotes safety to all involved
<b>Manage a group</b>	Group is managed in a safe manner to meet activity goal; assistance and direction given if and when needed. Route is managed to promote safety to group
<b>Manage multiple capsizes and emergencies</b>	Rescues are managed to promote safety to all in group
<b>Manage tows</b>	Roles of the group is determined Good communication maintained Tows are managed to promote safety to all

## Assessment Documents

The following documents should be produced and submitted to your Assessor prior to final assessment. Preferred format for Project is PDF.

<b>Project</b>	<p>Plan a six hour Flatwater paddle with a group of six novices in a location of your choice where your role is to plan the route and manage the group while on water. You are the Leader for all aspects of the trip but have an assistant with this qualification. The location must fit within the award definition above.</p> <p>Prepare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A hazard identification and risk management program for the trip</li> <li>• A detailed navigation plan for the trip including main route, stops and contingencies</li> <li>• An equipment list for the trip, taking into consideration sun sense and hypothermia precautions, and including equipment for group communication and rescue.</li> <li>• A basic contingency plan in the event of environmental, human or equipment failure</li> <li>• A list of permits and licenses for the trip</li> <li>• A briefing in point form to be delivered prior to departure, to include route, group spacing, actions in the event of sickness, group split, capsize or other emergency.</li> </ul> <p>Look at the Bureau of Meteorology site and choose a forecast for the location that will have an impact on your trip. Write down or print out that forecast. Analyze how the forecast conditions will affect your trip and outline any changes or precautions you might take</p>
<b>Assessment Record</b>	The completed Assessment Record for the award, signed by both Assessor and participant, preferably using the <b>Paddle Ed</b> app
<b>Log book</b>	A copy of your log book with verified entries supporting the <b>Minimum log book requirement</b> above