

Paddle Australia Qualification Scheme

Assessment Guidelines

Flatwater Skills - SOT



Qualification Definition

The holder of this award has demonstrated the ability to plan and conduct personal day based activities 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

Prepare appropriate craft and equipment	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
Secure craft for transport, secure equipment to craft	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
Launch and land craft	Participant launches and lands craft in a safe repeatable manner without assistance
Perform paddle strokes	Demonstrate individual strokes to manoeuvre the craft: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forward and reverse paddle• Forward and reverse sweeps• Draw strokes (feathered and sculling)• Stern rudder• Bow rudder• Stopping• Support using back of blade For each stroke the minimum performance requirements are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correct hand placement on paddle• Sufficient wrist movement to enable correct blade placement• Adequate paddle depth in water to achieve effective stroke• Correct paddle blade angle throughout stroke• Correct paddle entry and exit points with respect to craft and body position
Form into and disperse	A raft is formed in a timely manner (no wasted time) and

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from a raft	promotes safety to all involved
Perform self and buddy rescues	<p>Self rescue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swim craft 50m in paddling gear • Capsize and re-mount • Paddle float re-entry <p>Buddy rescue (rescues are performed as rescuee and rescuer):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip and hold <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>
Accept a tow	<p>Calm is maintained.</p> <p>Craft kept in a straight line while towed.</p> <p>Craft kept stable and balanced</p>
Perform a tow	<p>Demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single tow • Contact tow <p>Tows are performed using quick release system that floats if disconnected.</p> <p>Tows are performed to promote safety to all.</p>
Complete an activity	Activity plan/brief is followed to meet time management requirements and activity goals. Plan is adjusted if and when required
Rope work	<p>Demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bowline • Fisherman's knot • Round turn and two half hitches • Clove hitch • Highwayman's hitch • Truckies hitch
Individual Situational Awareness	Participant is able to monitor personal wellbeing as well as environmental elements that may effect all participants

Knowledge

Knowledge and maintenance of craft	<p>Good knowledge of what makes a craft suitable for Flatwater. Must include but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction • Material • Flotation • Water line • Handling characteristics • Grab handles • Foot support
Select appropriate equipment	Clothing and equipment is selected with consideration of sun sense and other environmental influences

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and clothing

Throughout assessment participants use appropriate equipment for the environment.
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
- VHF radio
- Tow line
- 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
- 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

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- 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

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

Communication

Maintain effective communication with a group

Participant stays within communication distance of the group.
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.
Act on constructive feedback

Experience

Minimum log book requirement

In the previous three years:

- Five Flatwater activities of a minimum of three hours duration

Assessment Documents

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

Project

Plan a three hour paddle with friends in a location of your choice. The location must fit within the award definition above.
Your friends have similar skills, experience and knowledge to you.
Prepare:

- A simple route plan for the trip including main route, stops and contingencies
- An equipment list for the trip, taking into consideration sun sense and hypothermia precautions
- A basic contingency plan in the event of environmental, human or equipment failure

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

Assessment Record

The completed Assessment Record for the award, signed by both Assessor and participant, preferably using the **Paddle Ed** app

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Log book

A copy of your log book with verified entries supporting the **Minimum log book** requirement above