



## NZOIA Kayak 1 Assessment Set Up

### **Introduction**

What follows is an overview of what you can expect over your three-day kayak assessment. We'll consider both the assessment tasks you are likely to be given and can be given, as well as the assessment criteria that will be used. We'll also have a look at the feedback processes that will be used and may be used, as well as what the possible final outcomes from the assessment can be. And finally, a few suggestions on what you can do to help yourself over the assessment.

### **Feedback**

Feedback is obviously a very important part of the assessment process. The assessors will be putting a lot of effort into ensuring that at the end of each session, you know what you did well, what you could have improved upon, and where your performance was in relation to the NZOIA benchmark. Wherever possible, tips will be given that you may choose to take on board in order to further develop your paddling and kayak instruction.

When comparing your performance to the NZOIA benchmark, on most occasions we'll use a five-point scale where a "three" is a benchmark (and therefore a pass) and a "five" is well above the benchmark – a role-model performance. A "two" is for a performance below the benchmark. A "one" is for a performance that is way below the benchmark and/or seriously compromises client safety.

As assessors we have a variety of methods for managing the feedback process. Our most commonly used methods are (in order of preference):

- A one on one feedback session with an assessor – including rounds of "What you would change if you ran the lesson again?", "What you'd do again?", and "Where do you think your performance was relative to the NZOIA bench mark?". This may also involve questions aimed at helping either the assessor understand your reasoning behind aspects of your session, or help you understand the effects of certain aspects of your session.
- Criteria based feedback – where you have been given a task (e.g., an assisted ferry glide) as well as the criteria/limits within which you must complete task. As you finish the task you will know whether or not you have done so successfully and how much room you had to spare. That in itself may often be sufficient feedback.
- Autocratic methods – where the assessor(s) simply give you a number grading your performance – this may be done one on one with the assessor, or with other assesseees present.
- Self-Assessment and Peer Feedback – notes on this are available on the NZOIA website, see: Assessment Resources/Feedback Methods

As well as making sure that at the end of each session you know how well you have done relative to the NZOIA benchmarks, we'll also make sure that at the end of each day you know exactly where you are standing in the whole assessment process – e.g., "cruising through, keep it up", "just hanging in there by the tips of your fingernails", etc.

### **Possible Final Outcomes**

There are three possible outcomes for you that can come out of this assessment: Pass, Defer, Resit.

A "**pass**" happens when you have passed all of the sections of the assessment. I.e., you have scored a "three" or above on each session. You will receive your certificate in the mail within the next four weeks.

A "**defer**" happens when you have scored less than a "three" in at least one session. A defer means that there is still more work to be done before you can pass the assessment. This may include such things as an assessor observing some of your assessment tasks again. E.g. if you score a "two" on your surf session, then you'll need to be observed on this again. The deferment criteria may also include requirements of further logged time, and/or further training. Once you complete the requirements of the deferment, you'll receive your certificate.

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A “**resit**” happens when you have compromised your own or your client/s safety, or where the sessions in which you score a “two,” amount to more than a third of the total assessment – i.e. you would need to be observed again for more than a day. A “resit” means that you turn up to another assessment – after paying the normal assessment cost, and start again with a clean slate.

### ***The programme and assessment criteria***

What follows below is the programme of a typical NZOIA kayak 1 assessment. This does not mean however that this is definitely the programme that will be followed. The assessors may choose to change the programme for a variety of reasons. These reasons may include, but not be restricted to: river/environmental conditions, the number of clients, time management issues, etc etc.

The assessors will only be assessing what is in the current syllabus – nothing more. Although we will not be setting out to assess everything in the syllabus, we also reserve the right to assess anything in the syllabus.

### **Day 1**

Day 1 will focus on your personal paddling skills and knowledge – your role modelling and rescues on class II water, and your paddling on class III water. We’ll also talk with you about the equipment that you show us that you usually take on a personal paddling trip and perhaps some other equipment. Over the day some other aspects relating to History, Ethics and Equipment may also be formally assessed.

The assessors will manage the river trip on class II water. We’ll select some class II rapids for you to role-model specific types of eddy turns with specific strokes asked for, as well as ferry gliding (forward and reverse) and rolling (left and right). In terms of where the benchmarks are for the role modelling: The assessors have the job of carrying the benchmarks forward from previous assessments which have been held on different stretches of river, at a wide variety of flows, all over New Zealand. We’ll be asking ourselves whether or not the visual images that you present on the river are what NZOIA believes are appropriate for a (deaf) beginner to learn from.

During this part of the assessment you can expect pretty instant feedback from the assessors on your performance. We’ll give you a number for each type of eddy turn etc and then later average them out in one way or another. One of the reasons for the instant feedback is so that everyone can gain a feel for where the benchmarks are.

Although we want to see *consistent* role-modelling skills (this is not a unit-standard-type assessment where if you can do it once, you can do it) one blown move is not the end of the world. If something is looking marginal, you’ll be given a further opportunity to demonstrate the skill. If at the end of the role-modelling section the assessors are still not keen to make a call one way or the other on your performance, they may ask that you teach particular skills during the moving water session with clients.

In terms of the paddling on class III water, we’ll be wanting to see that you can paddle class three water safely and in control. This does not mean being able to hit every eddy – it means that on class III water you are able to make enough eddies to be able to break rapids down into a series of “safe” moves as opposed to hopping on a hydro slide for a ride. Your roll (on one side) will also be assessed on class III water.

With the rescues (on class II water) you’ll be given a series of tasks to perform. The tasks will need to be completed safely, and with you in the role of an instructor rescuing/assisting a client. The water used for these rescue tasks will reflect the type of class II water where an instructor could realistically expect to be required to rescue a beginner / low end intermediate. In order to gain marks above the benchmark, you will need to be safely completing the tasks using the methods of best-practice.

In order to pass the *rescues on class II* section of the assessment, you will be able to drop one of the tasks, ie, if you are given nine tasks you will need to safely complete eight of them. This is an allowance for assessment nerves, however there will be no retries on individual tasks – this is because NZOIA puts a high value on client safety.

### **Day two and three**

On days two and three it is up to the **assesseees** (as in you!) to put on a two-day introductory paddling course where the desired end result is for the clients to have an enjoyable experience on class II water on the final afternoon. Your clients should also gain from the two days either appropriate basic beginner kayaking skills and knowledge, or if they already have them, appropriate further development of their existing kayaking skills and knowledge.

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The course will include a pool session, a flat-water session, a moving water instruction session, and a river trip on class II water. As a group you'll be expected to take responsibility for the two-day course, including the organisation of the clients and their equipment, site selection, shuttles, time management etc etc.

At the same time, because it is part of an assessment, the two-day course will probably be different from an "ideal" two-day course. There are some things that the assessors need to see. They also need to be confident at the end of the day that those who pass are indeed up to the standard of an NZOIA kayak instructor and will therefore follow up on any flags that may be raised over the time of the assessment.

- What this all means for you as an assessee is:
- In the pool session the assessors need to see you teach rolling **and** lay the necessary foundations for the later flat-water, moving-water and river trip sessions! We want to see at least ½ an hour, preferably at least ¾ of an hour of you teaching rolling to clients who have a paddle in their hands. Note: this does not mean that you need to progress all of your clients to this stage, nor does it mean that you should forget about all of the "other" things that you would usually stick into a rolling session
- On the final afternoon the assessors need to see you managing a group (preferably at a ratio of 1:4) on a class II river trip.
- The assessors reserve the right to change the programme plans around at any particular point in time. Such changes *may* include (but will not necessarily be restricted to):
  - asking that you teach a particular part of the syllabus (eg, C2C roll, Hanging stern draw etc).
  - Asking that you work with particular clients
  - Asking that you manage the clients on a particular piece of water.
  - Including more oral assessment components – in order to assess understanding of certain components of the syllabus.
- If any such requests are to be made, we'll communicate them to the affected assesseees as soon as practicable.

Note: if the assessors are getting to see everything that they need to as you run the two-day course, and everyone is really well prepared for the assessment, then there should be few if any of these "extra" requests.

In terms of how the assessors compare what they are seeing and hearing to the NZOIA Kayak 1 benchmarks, some questions that we often ask ourselves are:

- If I had to work with these clients tomorrow, is there anything from today's session that I would have to un-teach?
- Was the session sufficiently **Safe** – up to NZOIA Kayak 1 / Industry standards?
- Was the session sufficiently **Educational** - up to NZOIA Kayak 1 / Industry standards? (e.g. How much did the individual clients learn? How appropriate were the progressions and teaching points? How clear was the communication? Etc etc)
- Did the session have sufficient **X-factor** - up to NZOIA Kayak 1 / Industry standards? (e.g. Was there enough challenge? How enjoyable was the session for the clients? How much fun? )  
(Excuse the SEX acronym – it helps us remember ☺).
- **Note:** That these questions are generally asked and answered within the context of a two day intro kayak course. This is important for you to remember – as the progressions that you often use for a ½ day introductory kayak experience may not be appropriate to use, nor may the progressions and lesson structures that you often use on a year long kayaking programme.

### ***Dealing with assessments:***

- Some tips for having as good a time as possible over the time of the assessment are:
- If in doubt do what you would usually. Avoid playing the assessment game and doing things because you think it is what the assessors want to see.
- If you have any questions ask them. You may not get the answer that you are looking for – the assessors are always running a very fine line between telling you *what* they want you to do and *how* it should be done. We'll tell you *what* and go to great lengths to avoid the "*how*".
- Remember that it is simply your actions over three days that are being assessed – and not you as a person or instructor. The assessors will assess what they see and hear over three days – we do not pretend to be able to guarantee that everyone who does not pass a session would usually not pass that session in the

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workplace, nor can we guarantee that everyone who passes a particular session would usually pass that session in the workplace.

- The feedback is given on a take it or leave it basis. Although the assessors are drawn from amongst New Zealand's most experienced and skilled kayak instructors, we do not expect you to take on board every piece of feedback that you are given over the assessment. It's your choice what you take on board and what you choose to discard.
- Participate fully in the group decision-making in terms of programme design. If however after your participation a decision is made that you feel is inappropriate, tell the assessors.
- When the assessors are writing things in their notebooks, please don't assume that they are noting down pieces of "improvement" feedback. It may well be things that they really like about the session, it could be things about another session that they have just observed.

Have an enjoyable assessment. If you have any further questions then either ring or email your assessor prior to the assessment or ask at the pre-assessment meeting.