

## Level-1 Instructor

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### Course Description

This course provides national certification in the instruction and administration of the Paddle Canada Level-1 Skills course.

### Mandate of the Level-1 Instructor

The Level-1 Instructor is certified to:

- conduct Paddle Canada Waterfront Kayak, Basic Kayak and Level-1 Skills courses and certify paddlers at those levels,
- assist a Level-2 Instructor on a Level-2 Skills course, and
- assist a Basic Kayak Instructor Trainer on a Basic Kayak Instructor or Waterfront Instructor course.

### Course Details

#### *Prerequisites*

- At least 18 years of age.
- Skills Certification
  - Paddle Canada Level-2 Skills (please see the note below about this prerequisite).
- Instructor Certification
  - Basic Kayak Instructor highly suggested.
- Teaching Experience
  - None, though it is highly recommended that the prospective candidate have taught a minimum of two Basic Kayak Skills courses within the past three years, being the lead instructor on at least one of those courses.
- First Aid Certification
  - Current certification in first aid (14 hours) with CPR.
- Paddling Experience
  - 30 days in Level-1 conditions (including overnights).

**Skills certification prerequisite note:** With the permission of the Instructor Trainer, a candidate may enrol in a Level-1 Instructor course prior to completing their Level-2 Skills certification. Certification as a Level-1 Instructor is delayed until Level-2 skill certification

and all other requirements are complete. Passing the instructor course will be subject to the provision of completing the required Level-2 skill certification and updating the Instructor Course Report within one year.

This provision applies only to the Level-1 Instructor course and does not apply to any other certification.

### *Minimum Course Length*

32 hours of instruction (4 days) with a minimum 16 hours instruction on the water.

### *Class Ratio*

- 1 Instructor Trainer:6 candidates
- 1 Instructor Trainer + 1 Assistant:8 candidates
- 1 Instructor Trainer + 2 Assistants:10 candidates

### *Minimum Staff & Certification Level*

- A minimum of one Instructor Trainer is required to teach this course.
- Instruction staff must consist of at least one Level-1 Instructor Trainer.
- A maximum of two assistants are allowed. Assistants must be at least a Basic Kayak Instructor Trainer or a Level-2 Instructor.

### *Minimum Number of Registered Candidates*

This instructor course must have a minimum of three registered candidates to qualify. This is to ensure the candidate experiences an appropriate level of group dynamics and is able to demonstrate competence in managing those dynamics. This policy will be strictly enforced.

If there are fewer than three registered candidates, the instructor trainer can certify them via the instructor mentorship process, as outlined on page [179](#).

Due to the difference in course goals and presentation, Level-1 Instructor and Level-2 Instructor cannot be offered as one course at the same time.

### *Course Location*

Appropriate to a Level-1 Skills course.

### *Environmental Conditions and Sea State*

Environmental conditions must match those outlined in the Level-1 Skills course syllabus.

## First Aid Policy for Courses Operating in the Wilderness

Instructors are required to have Wilderness First Aid (16 hour) as a minimum whenever they are teaching in a location where the length of time for medical care to reach them is greater than one hour. If you are uncertain to the length of time to medical care, please complete and maintain Wilderness First Aid certification.

Refer to the section [First Aid Certification Requirements and Standards](#) on page [13](#) for more information on these policies.

## Instructor Candidate Assessment

The Level-1 Instructor candidate will be assessed by the following methods:

1. Ongoing assessment (by observation) of the candidate's performance in the areas of safety, self-care, care of equipment, group dynamics and leadership.
2. Written and/or oral presentations demonstrating ability to communicate course content.
3. A minimum of two demonstrations of teaching ability by each candidate, at least one of which shall be an "on water" session in which the candidate teaches a Level-1 Kayak skill.
4. Successful completion of a written test of approximately one hour in length (developed by the course director).

The Instructor Candidate will demonstrate all skills at a high level of proficiency with Level-2 Skills suitable for instructional demonstration purposes. Re-entry and general paddling skills will exceed minimum standards and be suitable to the instructional environment.

The instructor is a leader in the paddling community and must demonstrate above-average judgment in all matters relating to safety, group management and the health and welfare of all participants. The demands of the paddling environment make demonstration of good judgment an important skill for the completion of this course.

For each category of paddling skills, theory and teaching, candidates will be graded *Pass*, *Weak*, or *Fail*. To achieve this certification, a *pass* is required in all categories, but one *weak* may be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. Up to two *weak* evaluation items may be eligible for a conditional pass at the discretion of the instructor. A *fail* in any one category will result in a fail in the overall course. The head instructor will outline as clearly

as possible the criteria, which determines a pass, weak or fail grading of each test to the candidates prior to assessment.

Reassessment or retesting may be conducted by the course instructor or a designated instructor at the appropriate level, according to the guidelines. Please review the sections related to the use and restrictions of conditional passes and candidate retesting policies on pages [22](#) and [25](#) respectively.

## Level-1 Instructor Certification through Mentorship

As an alternative to an Instructor course, instructor candidates can earn certification through mentorship. The mentorship process entails working as an apprentice instructor under direct supervision of a mentor who is a qualified instructor trainer on a minimum of two appropriate courses.

Refer to the section, [Instructor Certification through Mentorship](#) on page [179](#) for specific information on the mentorship process.

## Course Outcomes

Across the broad expanse of Canadian waterways, consistency of course content and assessment is an important consideration. However, variations in regional geography and environmental conditions require instructor trainers to be flexible in their delivery of course content and the assessment of skills and knowledge.

### *Knowledge and Paddling Skills Review*

The candidate will:

- explain all knowledge and theory topics as outlined in the Level-1 Skills course, and
- perform a “demonstration quality” review of all paddling skills as outlined in the Level-1 Skills course.

Teaching notes:

- It is expected that the instructor candidate is able to demonstrate the required skills with ease and confidence, clearly showing the key components of each stroke at a level appropriate to the syllabus.

### *Instructor Ethics*

The candidate will:

- explain the Paddle Canada Instructor's Code of conduct, and
- explain the roles and responsibilities of a Level-1 Paddle Canada sea kayaking instructor.

### *Teaching Theory and Knowledge*

#### *Learning Styles and Strategies*

The candidate will:

- review and explain the different ways students learn (verbally, listening, watching, physically),
- discuss current thinking on individual learning styles, and
- the candidate will explain the concept of learning strategies. Example strategies may include:
  - use of repetition,
  - use of review and recaps,
  - presenting topics from simple to complex, building on concepts already addressed,
  - practicing and applying skills in a variety of ways and situations, and
  - understanding how the new skill is applied in 'real life'.

#### *Teaching Styles and Strategies*

The candidate will:

- explain the advantages and challenges of some common teaching styles (e.g. guided discovery, reciprocal, command, self-check, student-centred) and situations where these styles are appropriately used, and
- demonstrate an understanding of various teaching strategies (e.g. lectures, scenarios, discussions, games and activities, cooperative learning) and how they are effectively used when teaching Level-1 Skills.

### *Program Design and Delivery*

The candidate will:

- demonstrate a consistent, logical approach to the scope and sequence of teaching Level-1 material,
- be familiar with the characteristics of specific Level-1 Skills populations (ex. age, culture, degree of existing knowledge) and how to alter delivery to meet specific needs, and
- demonstrate proficiency at prioritizing Level-1 objectives to make best use of program time.

### *Adaptive paddling and inclusive instruction*

The candidate will:

- discuss what is meant by adaptive paddling and inclusive instruction, and
- discuss which disabilities can easily be accommodated for in a typical Level-1 Skills course.

Teaching notes:

- Adaptive paddling and inclusive instruction means being able to meet the needs of any population the instructor is working with by modifying the program or implementing creative solutions. Example populations include teaching kids, youth, adults, senior and people with physical or learning disabilities.
- Instructor Trainers should use this as an opportunity to discuss being student centered as well as some simple delivery adaptations (less talk more play when working with youth, ensuring someone who needs to read lips can always see your face, etc.).

### *Leadership Skills*

The candidate will:

- demonstrate strong leadership skills in a variety of situations during rescue scenarios, group travel in Level-1 conditions, and the daily routine of running a Level-1 Skills course,
- speak clearly and effectively with students using a variety of verbal and nonverbal communication tools in a variety of conditions, both on and off the water,

- explain implement and teach a comprehensive risk management protocol that provides the students with a logical framework for making decisions. This framework should include group reflection to inform future decisions,
- manage intra-group conflict, honouring the need for privacy and empathy, while working toward the stated goals of the group, and
- model appropriate behaviour in all their social, verbal, and ethical actions.

### *Risk Assessment and Managing Groups*

The candidate will:

- identify objective and subjective risks and weigh the significance of each element of risk,
- develop appropriate strategies for reducing, avoiding, and/ or retaining these risks,
- assess the scene, articulating potential hazards,
- communicate clearly with the group any actions and directions,
- remove hazards or remove the group from the hazards,
- implement a clear and organized response to the incident,
- critically assess the incident, highlighting successes and weaknesses, and any lessons learned for next time,
- review and be knowledgeable in the staff's own waterfront emergency procedures,
- organize the group or class according to the environment and needs of the lesson, and
- set and use appropriate communication tools, and manage appropriate boundaries.

### *Safety Skills*

The candidate will:

- respond effectively and quickly to a student unable to exit from their capsized kayak,
- explain common signs of a capsized and entrapped student in distress,
- explain and demonstrate proper wet exit protocol,
- demonstrate all re-entry skills with a high degree of proficiency as outlined in the Level-1 Skills course,
- demonstrate basic safety management including:

- ensuring equipment is in good repair
- site orientation
- ensuring pre-course paperwork is complete including waivers, medical forms, etc.
- select an appropriate teaching location for the student's needs, skill level and environmental conditions, and
- identify potential hazards in a variety of situations and state appropriate preventative safety procedures.
- explain the Transport Canada vessel regulations for guided excursions and the extra safety gear required to comply, and
- lead the group through a guided excursion safety briefing.

### *Evaluation and Assessment*

The candidate will:

- review the concept of learning outcomes, and how to use them to determine a student's performance,
- explain the Paddle Canada learning outcomes for Level-1 Skills,
- demonstrate a consistent ability to accurately assess a variety of technical and soft skills in relation to clearly defined objectives,
- develop and explain a rubric for quick, on-water assessment of strokes with a variety of possible solutions for common problems,
- review and practice, ways of giving feedback to students that are timely, accurate, supportive and positive,
- review the concept of benchmarks (performance standards below which a student cannot pass) and what the benchmarks are for Level-1 Skills, and
- explain when it is appropriate to use a Conditional Pass at the Level-1 Skills level.

### *Course Administration and Paddle Canada Knowledge*

The candidate will:

- be familiar with Paddle Canada policies and programs,
- discuss insurance and liability issues affecting the instructor,
- review course registering and sanctioning and reporting, and
- review certification maintenance policies and procedures.

Teaching notes:

- Many of the administrative topics can be covered in pre reading assignments and then quickly touched upon during course time.

## Assignments and Tasks

### *Course Plan Development*

The candidate will individually develop a detailed course plan for a complete Paddle Canada Level-1 Skills course. This assignment may be completed after the instructor course, however, certification will not be issued until the assignment and all other criteria have been satisfied.

The course plan will include:

- a list of course objectives,
- a clear and logical progression of skills and theory topics taught,
- a list of 3-4 benchmarks for each stroke and re-entry skill,
- estimated timelines for each activity or skill,
- teaching location for each activity or skill, and
- a detailed lesson plan for two strokes of the Instructor Trainers choosing. The lesson plan should include key points to emphasize and any planned activities or games.

### *Teaching Skills Demonstration*

The candidate will:

- develop and present a minimum of two formal demonstrations of their teaching ability by teaching both a paddling skill (on-water) and a knowledge topic (on-land) based on the Level-1 Skills syllabus,
- develop and demonstrate an appropriate teaching progression for the skills taught,
- provide a detailed lesson plan for each topic assigned,
- foster a rewarding learning environment by using positive language,
- use a range of appropriate teaching aids and techniques including on-water activities and games,
- model ethics and values consistent with the Paddle Canada with the Paddle Canada code of conduct,

- offer relevant, constructive feedback to participants during debriefing sessions, phrased in a non-threatening/demeaning manner,
- select a teaching location appropriate to the skill being taught and to the skill level of the students, as well as clearly communicate all boundaries for practice sessions, and
- it is expected that depth of knowledge for any presentations are appropriate to the syllabus and the needs of the student or local paddling environment.

Teaching notes:

- Presentations should be 15-30 minutes in length depending on the assigned topic.
- Each presentation should be organized with:
  - a clear introduction,
  - a middle that provides opportunity for feedback to students,
  - guides to identifying and fixing common errors, and
  - a defined end.
- All strokes will be of demonstration quality and demonstrated in a manner consistent with any explanation.
- Candidates should be given at least 24 hours' notice of their formal teaching topics. Other practice teaching session topics throughout the course may be assigned at short notice from a previously issued list.