

Raft Build Risk Assessment				
Written by	Ben Pearse Team Leader	Date reviewed	December 2025	Description of activity: Demonstrate your teamwork, eye for design and knot tying skills to build a raft that can carry your team on the river
Reviewed by	Sam Fenton Deputy Manager	Date of next review	December 2026	Qualifications required for activity: Paddle UK Paddle sport leader qualification/ in house activity assessment. Ratio 1:12 participants 1:2 rafts & 1 groups leader



What could go wrong?	Who is at risk?	What controls are put in place
Hot weather Dehydration, sun burn and sun stroke	Participants Staff	Participants Encourage participants to stay hydrated. If participants are visibly unwell we will get them to sit in the shade so they can lower their internal temperature. Staff Staff will need to come prepared for the sessions with the correct clothing and sufficient water for the session.
Wind and rain Hyperthermia, getting wet	Participants Staff	Participants Ensure that all participants are wearing suitable clothing for the weather conditions and the session. If participants are visually unwell ask them to cover up in suitable clothing. Staff All staff working in the outdoors must be prepared for all weather conditions so should all be wearing correct clothing.
Slips, Trips, Falls Head injuries, sprains, cuts and other injuries	Participants Staff	Instructor to remind all participants and other members of staff to walk within the session areas and to walk when carrying any equipment.
Equipment failure Minor and major injuries	Participants Staff	Instructor to check all equipment during the session and at the end of each session and making sure any damaged equipment is changed and noted to be check by management

<p>Broken equipment Minor and major injuries</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to make sure all equipment is check when setting up and any damaged or broke equipment is not used and moved away from other equipment and noted to management.</p>
<p>Manual handling Musclue strains, back injuries</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Participants Instructor to show and help participants move rafts and other equipment with right technique to prevent injuries.</p> <p>Staff Staff to make sure they are asking for help if needed and making sure all rafts are taken apart before moving. Ensuring that the right lift methods are used to make sure injuries are prevented</p>
<p>Other river users Conversation with unknown people and collisions with other river users.</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Instructors to remind participants that there may be other river users and what to do when encountered with one and how to act and behave to ensure all river users are safe.</p>
<p>Poor leadership & instructing Minor, major and critical injuries</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to maintain control of the group by setting rules where needed to ensure the session is ran safety. Such as where participants can and can't be during different parts of the session, that when the instructor is talking all participants are listening, all equipment must be used in the way the instructor has shown throughout the session.</p>
<p>Falling in the water Drowning, hyperthermia, cold water shock</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to teach participants how to avoid falling into the water, instructor to also teach participants what to do if they do fall in to ensure that they are rescued quickly, instructor also to point out where the water's edge is and where the end of the slip way is when launching and landing rafts.</p>
<p>Infections from water and riverbank Water borne diseases/ illness</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to remind all participants to wash their hands with warm soapy water to help fight the risk of infection. Participants are also told not to swallow the river water where possible.</p>
<p>Collisions with other canoes, paddles and obstructions Cuts, bruises minor, major and critical injuries.</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Rafts Instructor to remind participants to look where they are going and not to go too fast and that they must stay in control of their rafts throughout the session.</p>

		<p>Paddles</p> <p>Instructor to remind participants to keep their paddles low and not to hit others with their paddle. Paddles should never be at head height, when rafting up all paddles must be placed across rafts.</p>
<p>Entrapment</p> <p>Shock, Panic, Minor, Major and Critical injuries</p>	<p>Participants</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to remind participants never to put any part of their body through gaps between ropes, barrels and wooden poles</p>
<p>Animals and wildlife on the river</p> <p>Stress, psychological damage, bites</p>	<p>Participants</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to brief all participants on what to do if wildlife is encountered on the river and that participants should not try to touch or harm any wildlife.</p>
<p>Bites and stings</p> <p>Allergic reactions</p>	<p>Participants</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to know all medicals in the group and know what is needed if something was to happen, and to carry a first aid kit sealed in a waterproof container</p>
<p>Raft failure</p> <p>Entrapment, equipment loose in water, panic, cold water shock, hyperthermia, drowning.</p>	<p>Participants</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to inform and plan for if the raft fall apart when on the river. Instructor to also double check rafts before launching to ensure knots, ropes, pole and barrels are all fastened correctly.</p>
<p>Debris/ rubbish in the river</p> <p>Minor, major injuries from unseen rubbish in the riverbed</p>	<p>Participants</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to ensure all participants are wearing closed toe shoes throughout the entire activity. (NO WELLY BOOTS).</p>
<p>Jumping in (end of session)</p> <p>Drowning, cold water shock, hyperthermia</p>	<p>Participants</p> <p>staff</p>	<p>Instructor to make sure that participants only jump when the water is clear and that the instructor is ready. Instructor to also manage the number of participants jumping based on the group and their behaviour during the session.</p>