



Level 3: Coastal Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) Skills Assessment

Course Overview

This ACA Assessment Course is designed to evaluate your ability to perform all of the skills listed and demonstrate an appropriate level of paddling knowledge. This assessment course provides the opportunity for you to receive documentation of having achieved this level of paddling ability.

Course Prerequisites

- Acknowledgment of personal compliance with the [ACA Essential Eligibility Criteria \(EEC\)](#).
- Be a current ACA Member

Course Duration

One day (8 hours) or more at the assessor's discretion.

Course Location / Accessible Venues

Level 3: Coastal SUP assessment cannot be completed unless two of the four conditions necessary for rough water assessment are present during some portion of the course. Specified conditions must occur, but they do not have to be simultaneous. Area of escape from rough conditions must be accessible.

The four conditions include:

- 10-15 knot winds
- 2-3 foot/0.6-0.9 meters seas
- 1-2 foot/0.3-0.6 meters breaking waves (required)
- 2-3 knots of current

Course Size

5 Participants: 1 Instructor; with an additional qualified assistant, the ratio can be 10 : 2. The maximum number of participants permitted is 10.

Assessor

This assessment course may be offered by Level 3: Coastal SUP ACA Instructors, Instructor Trainers, or Instructor Trainer Educators.

Course Outline

The sequence of assessment should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location, time allowance, and craft being used. Participants must be able to perform all strokes, maneuvers, rescues, and

skills in the appropriate venue. In addition, the participant must demonstrate the appropriate level of knowledge for this level of skill assessment.

Equipment:

Candidates shall come prepared to manage themselves on a day-long trip. The following is a list of required items:

- General purpose, touring or similar stand up paddleboard equipped with deck attachments and leash plug
- Personal paddling equipment to include: U. S. Coast Guard approved and sport specific lifejacket (PFD), appropriate leash, paddle, whistle, spare clothing, hiker's compass, and paddling clothing suitable for immersion and appropriate to the conditions
- Food and water for the day
- Any additional items that may be required on the water

Introduction, Expectations, and Logistics

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork
- Student and instructor course expectations and limitations
- Explain assessment procedure
- Course itinerary and site logistics
- Review waiver, assumption of risk, challenge by choice, medical disclosure
- About the ACA
- PFD policy (always wear on water)
- Appropriate personal behavior
 - No alcohol / substance abuse
 - Proper etiquette on and off the water
 - Respect private property
 - Practice Leave No Trace ethics

Assessment: Candidates will be assessed in two areas: Technical skills and knowledge

Technical Skills

- Effective board remount from deep water
- Launching and landing
- Effective forward paddling
- Effective reverse paddling
- Pivot board 360°
- Turning with forward momentum
- Sideways movement—static
- Sideways movement with forward momentum

- Preventing falls
- Sculling for support
- Unconscious paddler rescue
- Self-rescue
- Towing

Knowledge

- Weather (knowledge of weather resources and the impact of weather on stand up paddleboarders)
- Basic navigation (interpret basic chart datum, plotting a course and adjusting for variation/declination)
- Leave No Trace skills and ethics
- Group awareness and communication
- Hazard assessment and avoidance
- Recognition, treatment, and avoidance of hypothermia and hyperthermia

Conclusion and Wrap-Up

- Group debrief/individual feedback
- Course Limitations
- Importance of first aid and CPR
- Importance of additional instruction, practice, experience
- Importance of appropriate level of safety and rescue training
- Life sport/paddling options
- Local paddling groups/clubs
- Reference materials
- ACA membership
- Course evaluations
- Assessment cards (if applicable)

Assessment Criteria Checklist

Participant Name: _____

Participant ACA Membership #: _____

Course Venue: _____

Course Date(s): _____

P = Pass, N = Not Pass, DNO = Did Not Observe

Technical Skills: Participant must be able to demonstrate each of the technical skills in a safe, effective and efficient manner in L3 conditions. The focus of the assessment will be on achieving desired results in context rather than on specific technique, i.e., while performing authentic tasks in conditions.

Technical Skills	Pass? P/N/DNO
launching and landing in a variety of contexts and conditions.	
Effective forward paddling—demonstrate the ability to maintain directional stability through a variety of techniques, and maintain speed appropriate to the environment while paddling forward.	
Pivot 360°—spin their SUP using combined draws and sweeps.	
Turning with forward momentum—demonstrate the ability to turn their SUP with a variety of techniques with forward momentum to include: edging, nose rudders, tail rudder (to go straight) tail draw, and tail pry.	
Sideways movement, static—demonstrate sideways movement using draw to the hip and sculling draw	
Sideways movement with forward momentum— demonstrate sideways movement with forward momentum using a draw on the move, hanging draw, or static pry	
Sculling for support—effectively and efficiently scull for support.	
Deep water rescue—demonstrate a variety of rescues in L3 conditions.	
Self-rescue—demonstrate the ability to successfully self-rescue in conditions using the technique of their choice.	
Towing—demonstrate proficiency in a variety of towing techniques to include: contact tows, rafted tows, inline tows, towing/carrying a swimmer, etc	
Unconscious paddler rescue	

Comment:

Strokes	Pass? P/N/DNO
SUP stances: prone / sitting / kneeling / neutral / offset variations	
Demonstrate how to hold the paddle in correct orientation and grip for effective paddling while standing and kneeling	
Forward	
Back	
Sweeps (forward, reverse)	
Draws to nose and tail and cross-nose	
Stern rudder	
Sculling for support	
Bracing: low brace and cross tail-heel side low brace	

Comment:

Knowledge: An individual’s knowledge shall be assessed using a variety of methods that may include: Observation, self-assessment, feedback, and questioning.

Knowledge	Pass? P/N/DNO
Weather—Is able to explain the effect of weather on stand up paddleboarders and show knowledge of various weather resources.	
Basic navigation—able to interpret basic chart datum, plot a course and adjust for variation/declination.	
Leave No Trace (LNT) skills and ethics—possesses a fundamental knowledge of Leave No Trace (LNT) skills and ethics.	
Group awareness and communication—demonstrate an understanding and proper use of on water signals and the importance of maintaining a small group profile.	
Hazard assessment and avoidance—demonstrate an understanding of hazard assessment, and avoidance of same, both on and off the water	
Recognition and avoidance of hypothermia and hyperthermia—demonstrate an understanding of the causes, treatments, and prevention of both hyperthermia and hypothermia.	

Comment:

Final Assessment
Pass or Needs More Work (circle one)
Assessor Name:
Assessor Signature:
Assessor ACA Number:
Course Conclusion Date:
Comments:

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This curriculum is managed by the ACA SUP Committee. To connect with the leadership of this committee, please view the SEIC Committee rosters on [the ACA website](#).