



Level 3: Fundamentals of Open Water Surf Ski (Instructor Criteria)

Overview: Fundamentally, we expect that participants should have the paddling skills, technical knowledge, rescue ability, teaching ability, group management, and interpersonal skills commensurate with this level of certification prior to presenting themselves for evaluation as Instructor Candidates at an Instructor Certification Exam (ICE).

Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):

ACA courses are open to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
3. Independently hold head upright without neck / head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket*
8. Get on / off or in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft*
10. Remount or reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
11. Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities and rescues listed in the appropriate Course Outline, and have the ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation*

** To participate in adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve teaching and practicing EEC #7-11.*

Course Prerequisites: Completion of the appropriate level skills course, assessment course, or equivalent skills.

Course Duration: Combined IDW and ICE - 3 days (24 hours)

Level 3: Fundamentals of Open Water Surfski instructor certification cannot be completed unless during some period two conditions necessary for assessment are present during some portion the certification course. The three (3) criteria are:



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Course Location / Venue: Open water with potential areas of exposure to conditions:

- Winds between 9-13 knots (10-15 miles/hr or 16-24 km/hr)
- Waves between 1-3 foot (0.3-1 meters)
- Current between 1-2 knot

Class Ratio: 5 Instructor Candidates : 1 Instructor Trainer; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 10 : 2

Succeeding courses:

Level 4: Downwind Surfski

Level 5: *Advanced Open Water and Downwind Surfski Paddling (under development)*

The following is a list of the criteria used to evaluate Instructor Candidates. The content covered and sequence of evaluation should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.

General Requirements for all Instructor Certifications:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Meet the appropriate essential eligibility criteria
- Successfully complete an Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW and ICE)
- Be a full ACA member
- Upon successful completion, register with the Safety Education and Instruction Council
- Have and maintain First Aid and age appropriate CPR
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately perform and teach all of the following material unassisted in the appropriate venue
- Instructors are expected to be able to demonstrate, teach, and model everything on the official ACA skills course and assessment course outlines which correspond to their level/craft.

Demonstrate knowledge and ability to efficiently/effectively plan and implement appropriate instructional sessions and assessments for a different learning styles and ability levels, to include:

- Differentiation of instruction based on the individual learner (student centered)
- Use of an appropriate skills progression when teaching complex skill sets
- Selection of appropriate teaching venue based on ability and desired outcomes
- Focus on core principals rather than specific technique
- Provides appropriate, specific and meaningful feedback

Maintenance Requirements:

- Teach at least two courses that meet ACA standards within the four-year certification period and report the results to the National Office
- Complete an Instructor Update, at the highest level of certification, during the four-year certification period
- Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration annually



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Level 3: Fundamentals of Open Water Surf Ski Instructor Requirements:

- 1) Demonstrate a knowledge of ACA Paperwork:
 - How to register and report a course (with and without insurance)
 - An understanding of the ACA Waiver and Release of Liability
- 2) Demonstrate a knowledge of:
 - Teaching theory
 - Learning theory
 - Effective methods of providing feedback
- 3) Demonstrate the following:
 - Positive interpersonal skills
 - Appropriate group management skills (including leadership and judgment)
 - Ability to choose an appropriate venue / class site
- 4) The ability to teach and model the basic paddle strokes and maneuvers effectively using a wing and euro paddle. This includes:
 - Forward stroke with no fishtailing
 - Reverse/back stroke to stop and reverse
 - Forward and reverse sweeps, to turn and or spin the surfski (including pivot turn)
 - Draw and sculling draw, to move the surfski sideways evenly
 - Draw to move the surfski sideways while under way
 - Low and high brace to avoid capsize
 - Slap brace in/on a wave
- 5) Demonstrate the understanding of and the ability to safely, effectively, and efficiently perform, assess and teach boat control skills, to include:
 - Launching and landing in the appropriate venue
 - Controlled capsize and effectively control the surfski
 - Edge awareness and control
 - Forward paddling and maneuvering in a variety of sea states, wind conditions, wind directions and tidal current up to the Level 3: Fundamentals of Open Water Surfski course venue
- 6) Demonstrate the ability to safely, effectively and efficiently perform, assess and teach rescue techniques in a variety of sea states, wind conditions, wind directions and tidal current up to the Level 3: Fundamentals of Open Water Surfski course venue:
 - Controlled capsize techniques
 - Self-Rescue with and without assisting devices
 - Side by side assisted rescue
 - Injured or unresponsive paddler rescue
 - Towing, pushing, and carrying a swimmer



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- 7) Demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to effectively and efficiently perform, assess, and teach the following:
- Safety issues and hazards of surfski paddling
 - Weather and tide conditions important to the surfski paddler
 - Cold water shock, hypothermia and hyperthermia; prevention and treatment
 - Management of equipment and hydration/nutrition
 - Signaling devices and safety equipment including VHF radios
 - Boat traffic “Rules of the Road,” and safe practice, maps, charts, float plans
 - Good body positioning
 - Proper surfski “fit” and surfski equipment selection
 - Surfski design, materials, and outfitting (footwell, bulkhead, etc.)
 - Surfski equipment and paddle (including wing paddles)
 - Rudder repair and safety equipment for added security (Repair kit, flares, etc.)
 - Leashes – boats and paddles
 - The roots, history, and model elements of surfskis
 - Surfski contact towing techniques
- 8) Demonstrate ability to safely, effectively, and efficiently and perform, assess, and teach group management and incident management skills and concepts in the Level 3: Fundamentals of Open Water Surfski venue, to include:
- Communications and signaling (VHF radio protocol Personal Locator Beacon (PLB), flares or mirrors)
 - Situational awareness
 - Appropriate leadership, judgement, and group management in the appropriate venue