



Level 5: Advanced Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor Criteria

Overview: Fundamentally, we expect that participants will 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:

To be eligible for Level 5: Advanced Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor Certification, an individual must be a currently certified Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayaking Instructor and have properly reported four Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayak skill classes or assessments within the past four years, and have completed either the Level 5: Advanced Open Water Coastal Kayaking IDW or the Level 5: Advanced Open Water Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader Assessment.



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The primary difference between L5: AOWCK and L4: OWCK is this:

The L4: OWCK Instructor has to be personally proficient in rough water but is not expected nor certified to teach and manage a group in those conditions. The L5: AOWCK Instructor must be more experienced and have the necessary training to conduct the approved ACA courses that fall within their certification.

Course Duration: Combined IDW & ICE - Minimum 6 days (48 hours)

Course Location / Venue:

L5: AOWCK certification cannot be completed unless during some period each of the conditions necessary for rough water assessment are present during some portion of the certification course. Conditions appropriate for rough water skill assessment

All of the conditions below must take place for L5: AOWCK certification:

- 3 - 5 foot seas
- 15-25 knots wind
- 3-4 foot surf break
- 4-5 knots current.
- Area of escape from rough conditions must be accessible.

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

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 & ICE)
- Be a full ACA member
- Upon successful completion, register with the Safety Education & 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

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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- 1) Demonstrate a knowledge of ACA Paperwork:
 - How to register & report a course (with and without insurance)
 - An understanding of the ACA Waiver & Release of Liability

- 2) Demonstrate a knowledge of:
 - Teaching theory
 - Learning theory
 - Effective methods of providing feedback



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- 3) Demonstrate the following:
 - Positive interpersonal skills
 - Appropriate group management skills (including leadership and judgment)
 - Ability to choose an appropriate venue / class site
 - Ability to identify individual students needs and develop an appropriate session plan.

- 4) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model the basic paddle strokes:
 - Forward (Touring & Power)
 - Reverse & Stopping
 - Forward and reverse sweeps
 - Draw (In-water / Out-of-water / Sculling)
 - High and low braces
 - Sculling brace
 - Rudder

- 5) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model the following maneuvers:
 - Low Brace Turn
 - High Brace Turn
 - Bow Rudder
 - Side-Slip

- 6) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model basic rescue techniques:
 - T-rescue
 - Side-by-Side
 - Rafted-T
 - Paddle Float
 - Contact rescue (tow / push another kayaker w/o use of towline)
 - Solo & Assisted Towing
 - Eskimo Rescue (Bow / Stern / Paddle)
 - Eskimo Roll
 - Re-enter & Roll
 - Scoop
 - Scramble
 - All-In
 - Unresponsive paddler rescue

- 7) Demonstrate ability to perform a reliable Eskimo roll.
 - 3 rolls within 1 minute (one must be from a non-set-up position)

- 8) Demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to teach, the following:
 - Safety issues and hazards of coastal kayaking
 - On water navigation and limited visibility navigation
 - Weather conditions important to the kayaker
 - Hypothermia and hyperthermia; prevention and treatment



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- Signaling devices and safety equipment
 - Boat traffic, Rules of the Road
 - Kayak design and equipment
 - Kayak towing technique
- 9) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model launching and landing in surf
- 10) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model strokes in rough water
- 11) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model rough water towing
- 12) Demonstrate the ability to teach and model rough water rescue techniques including; Back deck rescue, bow and paddle shaft rescue, self rescues, T-rescue variations, loaded boat rescues, etc.
- 13) Demonstrate ability to consistently roll in very rough water, wind and surf
- 14) Demonstrate ability to paddle and maneuver effectively and efficiently in Level 5 conditions.
- 15) Demonstrate leadership and group management skills in rough water and have the experience and judgment necessary to be a safe, effective instructor