# Risk Assessment – Para Paddlers

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| Date of risk assessment completion | 07/11/2025 |

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| Assessor's name | Caroline Pemble and Russell Mason | Date of next review | 07/11/2027 |

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| Description of risk assessment | Para Paddlers |

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| Location / environment details | Sheltered Water |

| What are the hazards? | Who might be harmed and how? | What are you already doing to control the risks, and who is responsible for this? | Risk level (L/M/H) | Are further controls necessary? |
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| Accessing craft | Para Paddlers:<br>● Bruising<br>● Strains, sprains and breaks<br>● Musculoskeletal injury | Parents to assist junior Para Paddlers with transfers, kit preparation, and equipment handling.<br>Paddle Leaders or other Club helpers to assist adult Para Paddlers only after consent from the paddler.<br>Paddle Leaders or other Club helpers to support Para Paddlers launching and landing.<br>Paddle Leaders or other Club helpers to consider positioning a chair or foam mat near the water's edge to ease access or removal of prosthetics.<br>Paddle Leaders or other Club helpers to ensure that wheelchair brakes are applied when Para Paddlers are transferring to and from chair.<br>Paddle Leaders or other Club helpers to assist with wheelchair | L | Coaches to draw up and record (in JustGo) individualised guidance to assist para paddlers to safely access craft |

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| | | storage whilst paddler is on the water<br>Club Committee to ensure firm and level paving between car park, club building, and water's edge to enable use of wheelchairs, crutches, and prosthetics to access the water. | | |
| Slips, trips and falls | Para Paddlers:<br>● Bruising<br>● Strains, sprains and breaks<br>● Musculoskeletal injury | Paddle Leaders to be aware of potential difficulties of portaging and encourage others to assist if needed.<br>Paddle Leaders to ensure that aids are transported to portage location if required. | L | Coaches to draw up and record (in JustGo) individualised guidance to assist para paddlers to safely portage (or record exemptions from portaging). |
| Poor fitment of craft | Para Paddlers:<br>● Bruising<br>● Friction burns<br>● Discomfort<br>● Musculoskeletal injury | Paddle Leaders to ensure that adjustments are made to boats for balance and comfort (e.g. foam blocks and knee pads).<br>Paddle Leaders to ensure that aids to steering and control (e.g. elastic bands) are fitted and checked before launch. | L | Coaches to draw up and record (in JustGo) individualised guidance to adjust boats for para paddlers. |
| Falling in | Para Paddlers:<br>● Drowning<br>● Secondary drowning<br>● Hypothermia<br>● Injuries from sharp objects in the water<br>● Head injury | Paddle Leaders to ensure that Para Paddlers wear buoyancy aids at all times on or near the water.<br>Paddle Leaders to ensure that there is a suitable ratio of Paddle Leaders and experienced paddlers to ensure rescues.<br>Coaches to ensure that a plan for individualised rescues has been determined where necessary.<br>Paddle Leaders to ensure that they have read and are aware of necessary adjustments for each Para Paddler in their session.<br>Paddle Leaders to ensure that the session can be run safely with the paddlers involved, and stop or change the session if is it not safe to continue. | L | Coaches to draw up and record (in JustGo) individualised guidance for rescues. |
| Entrapment in own craft | Para Paddlers:<br>● Drowning | Paddle Leaders to ensure that adjustments made to boats do not cause entrapment hazards. | M | |
| Manual handling | Participants:<br>● Musculoskeletal | Paddle Leaders to advise all participants and helpers on good manual handling techniques and to limit the need to assist Para | L | |

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| | injury | Paddlers. | | |
| Hypothermia / Hyperthermia | Para Paddlers:<br>● Hypothermia<br>● Heatstroke | Paddle Leaders to be aware of Para Paddlers additional needs for warmth or cooling. | L | Coaches to draw up and record (in JustGo) individualised guidance for warmth or cooling. |

Notes:

This risk assessment is an extension of the risk assessments for the craft and water classification and therefore needs to be applied in conjunction with those.