



Kingston Kayak Club

Outdoor Pool Sessions

Coaching and Deployment Approach

1. Purpose

This document describes Kingston Kayak Club's approach to the safe organisation, supervision and delivery of its outdoor pool paddlesport sessions for both junior and adult members.

It should be read alongside the Club's relevant risk assessments, safeguarding arrangements, emergency procedures and the operating requirements of the outdoor pool venue.

The approach recognises that junior and adult sessions are delivered differently:

- Junior sessions normally use structured ability groups with an allocated coach or coaching assistant.
- Adult sessions are generally more fluid, with coaching provided according to individual needs, often on a one-to-one or small-group basis.

In both cases, appropriately qualified and experienced coaches retain overall responsibility for the session.

Outdoor pool sessions will accommodate a maximum of 25 participants, subject to the Lead Coach being satisfied that the available coaching team, activities and safety arrangements are appropriate.

BCAB identifies enclosed swimming pools as Very Sheltered Water and suggests a ratio of 1:8 for solo craft. For the outdoor pool, the Club will confirm the applicable environmental classification through its venue risk assessment, including consideration of weather, access and egress and other site-specific conditions.

The suggested ratio is guidance rather than an absolute limit, with deployment decisions also taking account of coach experience, participant competence and the environment.

2. Overall Responsibility

Kingston Kayak Club, through its Committee and agreed safety framework, acts as the deployer for Club activity.

For each outdoor pool session, the Club will identify a suitably qualified and current Lead Coach / Session Lead.

The Lead Coach is responsible for the organisation of paddlesport activity on the day and for making professional judgements about:

- How coaching is organised.
- Which coaches or assistants undertake particular activities.
- Whether an individual is competent to support a particular paddler or skill.
- Whether planned activities remain appropriate.
- Whether coaching arrangements should be changed during the session.
- Whether the available staffing and safety provision are sufficient for the number of participants and activities planned.

Paddle UK defines the deployer as the person or organisation with overall responsibility for ensuring the appropriate safety framework and deployment arrangements are in place.

The Lead Coach operates within that framework and is responsible for implementing appropriate deployment decisions during the session.

3. Behaviour and Discipline

The Lead Coach / Session Lead is responsible for maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour and discipline throughout the session.

All participants are expected to follow instructions, behave responsibly, show consideration for others and comply with the Club's rules and safety arrangements.

The Lead Coach has the authority to:

- Address inappropriate, disruptive or unsafe behaviour.
- Give instructions or warnings to participants where necessary.
- Require a participant to modify or stop an activity.
- Temporarily remove a participant from the water where their behaviour presents a risk to themselves or others.
- Exclude a participant from the remainder of the session where their behaviour cannot be managed safely.
- Refer persistent or serious behavioural concerns to the Club Committee or Welfare Officer, as appropriate.

Coaches and coaching assistants are expected to manage routine behaviour within their allocated groups or activities, escalating significant or repeated concerns to the Lead Coach.

For junior sessions, the Lead Coach will ensure that any disciplinary action is appropriate to the participant's age, understanding and circumstances, and consistent with the Club's safeguarding arrangements.

Where a junior participant is removed from an activity, appropriate supervision will be maintained until they can safely return to the session or be handed over to their parent or responsible adult.

Safety, welfare and fair treatment will take priority in all disciplinary decisions.

The Lead Coach's authority relates to the safe and effective management of the session. Any formal disciplinary action beyond the session itself remains the responsibility of the Club Committee, in accordance with the Club's disciplinary procedures.

4. Typical Session Staffing

Both junior and adult outdoor pool sessions will normally operate with a coaching team comprising:

- Two current qualified coaches.
- Two experienced coaching assistants.

This is the Club's proposed normal staffing model, rather than an automatic authorisation to accommodate the maximum number of participants.

Current qualified coaches

These are coaches who meet the appropriate Paddle UK requirements to operate autonomously.

One of the qualified coaches will be identified as the Lead Coach / Session Lead.

Both qualified coaches will contribute to the supervision and delivery of the session, subject to any separate poolside safety responsibilities.

Experienced coaching assistants

These are individuals whom the Lead Coach considers competent to support delivery within an agreed remit.

They may include people with extensive coaching experience and historic qualifications who are not currently deployable as autonomous coaches because one or more currency requirements, such as first aid, are no longer current.

Such individuals are deployed as coaching assistants under the supervision of a current qualified coach, rather than as autonomous coaches.

Paddle UK defines supervision as assisting a session with a suitably qualified coach or leader who is able to operate autonomously.

The Lead Coach will assess the competence of each assistant and determine which activities they may appropriately support.

Staffing and participant capacity

The normal staffing model of two qualified coaches and two assistants may be used for sessions of up to 25 participants where the Club's documented deployment assessment supports that arrangement.

The Lead Coach will consider participant numbers, individual abilities, the competence of assistants, the activities planned and the level of supervision available.

Where the available team cannot safely support the planned attendance or activity, additional qualified coaches will be required, or participant numbers and activities will be reduced or modified.

Any coach required to undertake dedicated poolside safety duties will have those responsibilities taken into account when assessing the remaining coaching and supervision capacity.

5. Junior Session Delivery Model

The junior session will normally involve up to a maximum of 25 paddlers.

Participants will generally be divided into ability groups according to their experience, competence and coaching needs.

The number and size of groups will be determined by the Lead Coach, taking account of the available qualified coaches and assistants.

At the start of the session, the Lead Coach will normally:

1. Bring the group together.
2. Lead or coordinate the warm-up.
3. Organise the paddlers and boats.
4. Divide paddlers into appropriate ability groups.
5. Allocate a coach or coaching assistant to each group or activity.
6. Identify suitable activities or development themes.
7. Give coaches and assistants an opportunity to clarify the planned activity.

Regular junior paddlers will often be familiar with the group in which they normally train, although the Lead Coach may change groups where appropriate.

The allocation of coaches and assistants will be based on competence rather than simply dividing participants evenly.

The most technically demanding, challenging or advanced group will normally be allocated to an appropriately experienced qualified coach.

Experienced coaching assistants may support less demanding groups where the Lead Coach is satisfied that the activity is within their competence and that appropriate supervision is maintained.

The Lead Coach may coach a group directly while retaining oversight of the wider session.

With the normal staffing arrangement of two qualified coaches and two assistants, the Club will not assume that five separate groups of five can each be allocated a dedicated member of coaching staff.

Instead, the Lead Coach will organise groups and activities in a way that allows the available coaching team to provide appropriate instruction and supervision.

Where participant numbers, abilities or activities require more direct coaching than the available team can provide, the Lead Coach will adjust the arrangements accordingly.

6. Adult Session Delivery Model

The adult session operates on a more individualised and flexible coaching model.

The maximum number of adult participants is 25, although actual attendance may be lower.

Adults are not routinely divided into fixed ability groups.

Instead, coaches move between paddlers and provide coaching based upon:

- The individual's current ability.
- Their personal objectives.
- What they wish to practise during the session.
- The technical complexity of the skill.
- The coach's own competence and experience.

Coaching may therefore include:

- One-to-one coaching.
- One coach working with two or three paddlers on a common skill.
- Short periods of observation and feedback.
- Independent practice between coaching inputs.
- Paddlers moving between different coaches during the session.

Experienced participants may undertake independent practice within the agreed safety arrangements while coaches provide direct instruction to others.

Independent practice does not remove the need for appropriate supervision or the Lead Coach's oversight of the session.

The Lead Coach retains oversight of this more fluid arrangement and ensures that coaches and assistants work within their competence.

The level of direct coaching required will be considered when determining whether the normal staffing arrangement is sufficient for the number of adults attending.

7. Allocation of Technical Skills

Some skills require a higher level of technical knowledge, observation or safety competence than general paddling development.

KKC will therefore allocate more technically demanding coaching to appropriately experienced coaches.

For example, rolling instruction will normally only be delivered by coaches whom the Lead Coach considers suitably experienced and competent to teach rolling.

Less experienced coaches or coaching assistants may observe, support or reinforce aspects of the skill where appropriate, but will not be expected to independently teach techniques beyond their competence.

This is a KKC operating decision based on competence, rather than a separate Paddle UK qualification requirement specifically for rolling.

Paddle UK defines competence as the combination of training, skills, experience and knowledge and the ability to apply them safely.

The Lead Coach will also consider whether technically demanding activities require additional direct supervision or temporarily reduce the coaching resources available for other participants.

8. Use of Coaching Assistants

KKC recognises that competence is not determined solely by whether somebody currently holds all the requirements to operate autonomously.

Some assistants may have:

- Many years of coaching experience.
- Historic coaching qualifications.
- Extensive discipline knowledge.
- Significant practical experience with KKC paddlers.

The Lead Coach may deploy such individuals within a defined remit where satisfied that they are competent for the activity.

Assistants are expected to:

- Remain within the scope agreed with the Lead Coach.
- Seek advice where unsure.
- Refer technically difficult or unfamiliar situations to an experienced coach.
- Stop or modify an activity where they are not confident that they can continue safely.

Coaching assistants will not be treated as equivalent to autonomous qualified coaches solely for the purpose of calculating coach-to-participant ratios.

Their contribution to the coaching and supervision arrangements will nevertheless be considered as part of the Club's deployment assessment.

The Lead Coach must be satisfied that the qualified coaches can provide appropriate supervision of assistants while maintaining oversight of the wider session.

The Lead Coach retains overall responsibility and remains available to support or intervene.

9. Supervision and Line of Sight

The Lead Coach does not need to continuously observe every coaching interaction.

The Club's approach is that the Lead Coach:

- Maintains appropriate awareness of the wider session.
- Retains suitable line of sight within the outdoor pool environment.
- Remains readily accessible.
- Can provide guidance where required.
- Can intervene if an activity moves beyond an assistant's agreed remit.

This allows the Lead Coach to coach participants directly while still providing overall supervision.

Where coaching assistants are supporting separate groups or activities, the Lead Coach will ensure that supervision arrangements remain appropriate to their competence and the nature of the activity.

For the adult session in particular, the fluid nature of the coaching means coaches may regularly move between paddlers and activities.

The Lead Coach will also take account of the outdoor pool layout, including any areas where visibility, access or supervision may be restricted.

Line of sight alone will not be regarded as sufficient supervision where the activity, participant or assistant requires more direct support.

10. Ratios and Deployment

BCAB suggests a ratio of 1:8 for solo craft in Very Sheltered Water.

The guidance also states that ratios are suggestions, particularly for newly qualified or less experienced coaches and leaders, and that deployment should take account of coach experience, participant competence and the environment.

BCAB also recognises that deployers may adopt different ratios and/or qualifications for specific activities where supported by appropriate safety management systems and risk assessments.

KKC does not therefore treat the suggested ratio as a simple calculation of:

Number of participants ÷ number of adults present.

Instead, the Lead Coach considers:

- Number of current qualified coaches.
- Number and competence of coaching assistants.
- Participant ability.
- Age and behaviour.
- Complexity of the activities.
- Pool layout.
- Environmental and weather conditions.
- Venue safety arrangements.
- The level of direct coaching required.
- The ability of qualified coaches to supervise assistants while maintaining oversight of the wider session.

Normal staffing arrangement

KKC's proposed normal staffing arrangement is two current qualified coaches supported by two experienced coaching assistants.

For a session of 25 participants, this represents a ratio of one qualified coach to 12.5 participants, before accounting for the additional support provided by assistants.

This exceeds BCAB's suggested 1:8 ratio when calculated solely against the two qualified coaches.

The Club recognises this distinction and will not automatically count coaching assistants as qualified autonomous coaches.

The Club may use this staffing model where a documented deployment assessment supports it, taking account of the specific participants, activities and environment.

The assessment should identify the assistants' competence and agreed remit, how they are supervised, the qualified coaches' responsibilities and any additional measures needed to maintain safety.

Where the circumstances do not justify the proposed arrangement, the Club will provide additional appropriately qualified coaches or reduce participant numbers or activities.

Junior sessions

Small structured groups will normally provide the principal method of managing coaching deployment.

Adult sessions

Participant numbers may be similar but coaching demand will normally be managed through fluid one-to-one and small-group coaching, with independent paddlers practising between coaching interventions.

The fact that an adult receives one-to-one coaching for part of the session does not mean that coach is allocated exclusively to that person for the entire session.

Maximum capacity

The maximum of 25 participants is a capacity limit rather than a guaranteed operating number.

The Lead Coach will ensure that the available coaching team and safety arrangements are appropriate before allowing the session to operate at maximum capacity.

Where circumstances change during a session, the Lead Coach may modify activities or reduce the number of participants actively taking part.

Deployment decisions that depart from the suggested ratio will be recorded in accordance with the Club's safety framework.

11. Poolside Coach / Lifeguard Provision

In addition to Paddle UK deployment requirements, KKC will operate within the requirements of the outdoor pool venue.

Appropriate poolside safety and rescue provision will be maintained in accordance with the venue's operating requirements and the Club's risk assessment.

Where a suitably qualified coach is designated to provide a poolside coach/lifeguard function, that person's safety responsibility will take priority over any coaching activity they may also undertake.

They may nevertheless:

- Observe paddlers.
- Provide feedback from poolside.
- Assist with technical coaching.
- Advise other coaches.
- Provide an additional experienced point of contact.

These activities may be undertaken where they do not interfere with the required safety role.

Where one of the two qualified coaches is required to fulfil a dedicated poolside safety role, the Lead Coach will reassess the coaching and supervision capacity available to deliver the session.

The Club will not assume that a qualified coach undertaking dedicated poolside safety duties is simultaneously available to provide the same level of active coaching and supervision as a coach working directly with participants.

Additional coaching provision, reduced participant numbers or modified activities may be necessary.

The Lead Coach will ensure that the agreed poolside safety arrangements are maintained throughout the session.

12. Pool Controller

Where required by the outdoor pool venue's operating arrangements, a Pool Controller will be positioned poolside to provide oversight of activity across the pool.

The Pool Controller provides whole-pool observation from an elevated or otherwise suitable position.

They may identify and alert the coaching team to:

- Participants appearing to be in difficulty.
- Inappropriate behaviour.
- Unsafe activity.
- Incidents requiring intervention.

The Pool Controller is not required to provide paddlesport coaching.

Where the outdoor pool does not require a separate Pool Controller, the Club's risk assessment and operating arrangements will identify how appropriate whole-pool observation and safety oversight are maintained.

A person fulfilling a dedicated Pool Controller role will not automatically be counted as available coaching staff.

13. Emergency and First-Aid Provision

Outdoor pool sessions will operate within the Club's agreed safety framework and the emergency arrangements established for the venue.

Appropriate first-aid and emergency response arrangements will be available throughout the session.

The Lead Coach will ensure that the coaching team is familiar with:

- The venue's emergency procedures.
- How to summon emergency assistance.
- The location of first-aid and rescue equipment.
- The arrangements for removing a participant safely from the water.
- The procedures for responding to an incident requiring immediate intervention.

Where lifeguards or other emergency resources are provided by the venue, these form an additional layer of safety but do not replace KKC's own responsibilities under its safety framework.

The Lead Coach will also consider weather conditions and any environmental factors that may affect the safe delivery of the session.

The presence of venue first-aid resources will not be treated as automatically removing the qualification and currency requirements applicable to coaches under the Standards for Deployment.

14. Dynamic Management of Sessions

The Lead Coach may alter the session arrangements at any time.

This may include:

- Reallocating a coach.
- Moving a paddler to a different coach.
- Changing the planned activity.
- Asking a more experienced coach to take over a technical skill.
- Combining or separating participants.

- Stopping an activity.
- Reducing the number of participants actively undertaking a particular exercise.
- Intervening where behaviour or discipline is affecting the safe delivery of the session.
- Temporarily or permanently removing a participant from an activity where necessary to maintain safety.
- Modifying or stopping activities in response to changing weather or environmental conditions.
- Reducing participant numbers where the available coaching resources are insufficient.
- Reassessing deployment where a coach or assistant becomes unavailable or is required to respond to an incident.

Paddle UK's Environmental Definitions encourage dynamic decision-making based upon experience, participant ability, qualification and environmental factors.

The Lead Coach will ensure that any changes do not leave activities or participants without appropriate supervision.

15. Key Operating Principles

Across both junior and adult sessions:

- A current qualified coach will retain overall responsibility for the paddlesport session.
- The Lead Coach will maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and discipline, with authority to intervene, restrict participation or remove individuals from activities where necessary.
- The normal proposed staffing model is two current qualified coaches supported by two experienced coaching assistants, subject to an appropriate deployment assessment.
- Coaching assistants will only undertake activities the Lead Coach considers appropriate to their competence and will remain under suitable supervision.
- The suggested BCAB ratio of 1:8 for solo craft in Very Sheltered Water will be considered when determining appropriate deployment.
- Where the Club operates outside the suggested ratio, the decision must be supported by a documented assessment of the participants, activities, environment and available coaching resources.
- Junior coaching will normally operate through structured small groups.
- Adult coaching will normally operate through flexible, bespoke coaching according to individual need.
- More technically demanding skills, including rolling, will be allocated to appropriately experienced coaches.
- The Lead Coach will remain available to provide advice or intervention.
- Appropriate poolside safety, supervision and emergency arrangements will be maintained in accordance with the venue's requirements and the Club's risk assessments.
- Coaches undertaking dedicated poolside safety responsibilities will have those duties taken into account when assessing the available coaching capacity.

- Outdoor pool sessions will have a maximum capacity of 25 participants, subject to safe deployment decisions.
- Environmental and weather conditions will be considered when planning and delivering sessions.
- If the available coaching team is insufficient for the participants or activities planned, the session will be modified rather than stretching the available coaching resources beyond what the Lead Coach considers safe.