

Successfully & Safely Planning your Adventure Sports Club Activities

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Health and Safety Advisor



Duty of Care - Officers

- Ensure in so far as is reasonably practicable that activities undertaken in safe manner
- Do not cause injury/ illness through negligence
- Comply with 'duty of care' by preplanning
- Clubs & Socs 'Code of Safe Practice Template' provides a framework for planning – and a written record of club / soc risk management. Must be communicated!
- Ensure all accidents/incidents are reported to DCU Health and Safety in a timely manner.



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What to Do?

- Complete Code of Safe Practice
- Evaluate NGB rules vs DCU Rules
- Create schedule of activities for the year ahead. Seek approval
- Complete a detailed Risk Assessment for all **foreseeable risks**. Communicate the control measures appropriately (i.e. training, SOP, etc)
- Complete Standard Operating Procedures for the Club
 - Define competency, leader, novice
 - Define ratios
 - Details on how rules are implemented
 - Details on Equipment Maintenance
 - Detail on fire aid/emergency arrangements
 - Detail arrangements for leadership
- Detailed trip planning including risk assessment, assessment of required competencies, arrangements for adherence with your SOP and emergency plans
- Ongoing **dynamic risk assessment** at every activity.
- Debrief on lessons learned after every activity



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Defining Competence

Competent Participant

Novice Participant

Competent Leader

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Led Activity

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Written Risk Assessments

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Section 7 - Developing Competent Participants

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Evidence of Competence To Lead

Mountain Training National Qualifications

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Syllabi For Inhouse Accreditation

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Competency Requirements

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On-Campus Climbing Wall

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Competency

Qualified Members or Alumni: Club members or alumni leading an activity who hold an appropriate leadership award.

Competent Members or Alumni: Club members or alumni who lack a specific qualification or award, who have an approved level of training, skills, experience, and knowledge with the ability to apply these as a leader.

External Mentor: an individual or other NGB-affiliated club with the appropriate leadership awards.

External Provider: The activity is provided via a formal NGB-approved setting (commercial or club-based).

Site Specific: A specific site can be used by club members who have been trained and who satisfy the NGB that they are capable of leading activities at that site only. Or individuals who have been trained and are capable of leading at a particular challenge level of the activity.

Working Document

Student Sport Ireland
Adventure Sports
Guidance



ILC
Humphrey Murphy
May 2025

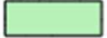


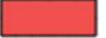
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	Qualified Members / Alumni	Competent Members / Alumni	Qualified External Mentor / Instructor	Qualified External Provider	Site/Level Specific
Caving					MC
Kayaking Canoeing					SST
Mountain Biking					Potentially
Orienteering					RTG
Sailing	In ATC Only		In ATC Only		
Scuba Diving					
Surfing					
Windsurfing	In ATC Only		In ATC Only		
Hiking		TA/CL			TA/CL
Climbing		TA/CL			TA/CL
Mountaineering					

Ideal Acceptable Not
 Recommended




ATC: Accredited Training Centre.
 CL: Competent Leader as confirmed by
 TA or in-house training.
 MC: Mentor clearance from NGB
 RTG: Ready to Go Award.
 SST: Canoeing Ireland Site Specific
 Training
 TA: Technical Advisor clearance

Risk Assessment

A **Hazard** is a potential source of harm or adverse health effect on a person or persons

Risk is the likelihood that a person may be harmed or suffers adverse health effects if exposed to a hazard.

Risk = Likelihood X Severity

Risk Assessments Required

1. Club Risk Assessment. Completed at the start of the year. Control measures will feed into Standard Operating Procedures
2. Trip Risk Assessment. Completed prior to each trip taking into account specifics.
3. Dynamic Risk Assessment. Ongoing throughout trip.

Example of potential hazards to be assessed:

- Leaders with inadequate training/qualifications/experience
- Participant conduct
- Novice participants
- Injuries associated with the activity
- Inappropriate Kit
- Inappropriate Equipment
- Inadequate training
- First Aid Plans/Kit
- Medical Emergencies
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Alcohol/Drugs
- Unsuitable location/pitch/court
- Unsuitable conditions (weather)
- Participant registration/insurance
- Travelling to locations
- Hosting other clubs
- Fund raising/social activities
- Fire Safety
- Minimum number for safe participation



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Sample Risk Assessment

First Aid				
Inadequate First Aid	A first aider must be present at all club activities. First Aid kit checked and replenished prior to every trip.	Low	None identified	
Emergency Procedure				
Accidental Capsize	Helmets <u>worn at all times.</u> Rolling taught in swimming pool. All members have practiced capsize drill in swimming pool with experienced paddlers observing. All members <u>are able to swim.</u> Group leader equipped with appropriate rescue equipment including knife, throwlines, tow lines and chest harnesses, mobile phone. Self-rescue techniques taught and practised in controlled conditions	High	At least one person trained in first aid should be present on all trips. Dynamic risk assessment to identify emergency procedure for the exact conditions. Arrangements for emergency services if required are agreed particularly area description, conditions for EMTs, distance from hospital.	1 week ahead of trip and on day of activity.

Dynamic Risk Assessment

P	Previous Knowledge Ground conditions (wet / dry / frozen / flooded / landslide etc) Wind / storm etc (could wind etc have caused damage – powerlines, trees etc) River/Sea conditions (Flood, abnormally low etc)
L	Local knowledge Particularly dangerous river sections/ walk sections / cliffs / areas / local weather conditions
O	Observation What is currently happening? – raining/snowing/ thunder clouds/ hot sun. Remain alert for changing conditions – be prepared to change plans/curtail activities based on changing conditions
W	Weather Forecast Get area specific forecast – usually v accurate – weather may arrive a little earlier/later than forecast.
D	Doubt IF IN DOUBT- DON'T GO OUT! – have a BACK UP Plan (even if it is only card games in the local club/pub!

Case Study – UL Kayak Club



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- Aisling O'Connor, 21, drowned after she became trapped under a tree branch in the Upper Caragh river near Glencar, Co Kerry, on November 2nd, 2019.
- Conditions changed significantly due to adverse weather conditions.
- Grade of river after rain did not match the competency of the group
- Large amount of debris in the river
- 2 Kayakers capsized and were stuck underneath a tree.



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Marine Casualty Investigation Board Report

“not suitable for all the members of the trip to manage safely”.

” not properly assessed for the risks attached to the prevailing conditions and having regard to the skills and experience of the group taking part in what is a high-risk sport”.

“a lack of adherence to the ULKC Safety Statement 2014 and the Trips Policy and Procedure which set out control measures, which led to a lack of accredited training, which in turn led to poor decision making”

It says that had there being CI- qualified instructors available (or persons with recognisable equivalent training and experience) they “would have identified that the group was too large and its makeup too inexperienced and would not have approved a trip that involved a group of beginners in those conditions, and/or, having embarked would have realised that the conditions being experienced were not suitable and would have terminated the trip”.



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Health and Safety

[Home](#) [Report an Incident](#) [Guidance](#) [Training](#) [Safety Statement and Risk Assessment](#) [Fire Safety](#) [Contact Us](#)



Report an Accident/Incident/Safety Concern

Report an Accident/Incident/Near Miss

Report a Safety Concern

The online form incident/accident/near miss form should be used to report the following:

- Health and Safety hazards which could pose a risk to a persons health and safety, including work practices.
- Health and Safety hazards which could pose a risk to the environment.
- Health and Safety incidents such as work related injury, illness or near misses to staff, students, contractors or visitors.

Safety Quicklinks

[Report an Incident](#)

[Report a Safety Concern](#)

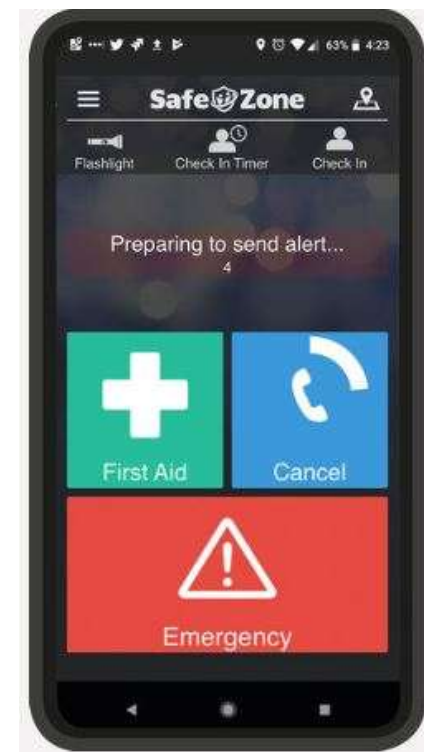
[Workstation Self
Assessment](#)

[Pregnancy Risk
Assessment](#)

Safezone App

Mandatory for all trips off Campus

- Check in
- Push texts
- Geo Locator
- Emergency Alerts





DCU Health and Safety Office

Henry Grattan Building – CG10

Contact – safety@dcu.ie