

Paddle

Paddle Discover Award

Award Description

Your Discover Award allows you to develop your decision making and practical skills for a fun and safe time on the water, taking you on the next steps towards becoming a proficient and independent paddler. Learn how to choose and effectively use equipment, whilst developing an understanding of the factors which affect your paddling; giving you the confidence to progress to making your own choices with the Explore Award.

Award Content

1. **Getting Ready**

Before getting to the water you must choose suitable kit and equipment and have the correct knowledge to use it. Key points you may consider are:

What will I wear?

What are the clothing options available to me? How might my chosen activity affect which clothing I choose? Am I confident in the use of my chosen personal safety equipment?

What will I use?

What are the different equipment options available and why might I choose one over the other? How do I use my equipment? What do I do if there is a problem with it?

Have a think about what additional equipment might be useful to have access to on the bank.

2. At the Venue

When heading to the water you should have an understanding of your chosen location and how you will access it. Key factors to consider include the type of water, the weather and features of the location you choose.

You can take each of these factors into consideration and ask yourself some questions to ensure the correct decisions are made.

Factor: Type of water

I may need to know: Am I on moving or still water? What are the current water levels? What difference will this make to my session? Where can I go and are there restricted areas? Why might those limits be in place?

Factor: Weather

What I might observe: What is the weather forecast for the time I am on the water? How might the wind speed and direction affect me?

Factor: Accessing the water

I may need to know: Where are the best access points to the water and what makes them suitable? How I can minimise damage to the bank when getting on? What are the best techniques to lift and carry my chosen craft? Are any aids available to help me get it on and off the water?

3. On the Water

When on the water you should be in control and aware of your surroundings and other users. Key skills to achieve control include staying relaxed and understanding how to move your craft.

Consideration: Other users

I may need to know: Who, or what else, will be on the water? What is the etiquette around fellow water users? How can I minimise disturbance to wildlife?

Skill: Controlling the direction of your craft

I may need to know: Which strokes I can use to move forward and steer my craft? How can I stop my craft and return to my start point? How can my positioning in or on my craft affect its performance?

Consideration: Safety and rescue

I may need to consider: How would I safely get myself or others back to shore or into the craft?

4. **After the Session**

Every time on the water is an opportunity for learning and improving. You can create a positive impact on your future experiences by performing a good post-activity assessment.

Watching what others do: It might be useful to spend some time watching any others on the water. What skills are they using? Are they doing things differently to you? Why might that be?

Consider your experience: What have you learnt today? What went well? What could you have done differently? How did your choice of equipment affect the experience? What skills would you like to focus on next time? Is there a specific paddlesport activity or discipline you would like to explore?

5. **Future Development**

Each day you spend on the water further expands your skills and knowledge, creating a more enjoyable experience on the water. With no two experiences on the water ever the same, you never stop learning.

Continually evaluating the choices you make creates a natural evolution of decision making ability. When you reach a certain point in this, it may be worth considering if you want to specialise in a particular activity or discipline, developing further skills using either the Paddle Explore award or Discipline specific award pathways.