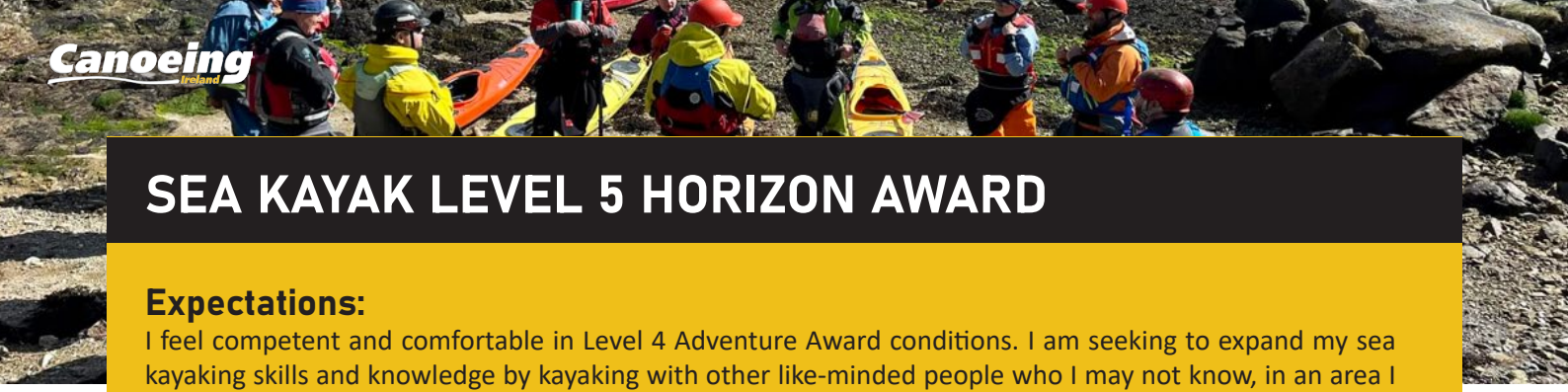
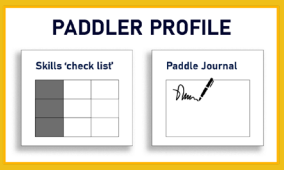


SEA KAYAK LEVEL 5 HORIZON AWARD

Expectations:

I feel competent and comfortable in Level 4 Adventure Award conditions. I am seeking to expand my sea kayaking skills and knowledge by kayaking with other like-minded people who I may not know, in an area I may not know. I would like to challenge my ability to execute sea kayak rescues in a challenging environment. I would like to obtain the highest award in the Canoeing Ireland Sea Kayaking skills syllabus. I would like to be confident in open crossings and have the competence to approach longer and more exposed sea kayaking passages safely and confidently.

I would like to set myself a high standard goal to achieve. I am planning an extended or remote trip and would like to prepare for it adequately. I would like to improve my overall sea kayaking competence so that I can give back to my club or paddling community. I have looked at the Level 5 Sea Kayaking skills Horizon award and feel that it is a realistic challenge for me. I would like to contribute to improving the national standard of sea kayaking in Ireland.



Level 5 Conditions

The following parameters will help guide on conditions on any given day. All conditions may not be present at any one time. The Level 5 paddler is expected to have the competence to adjust to the conditions listed below as they occur.

Coastal Features: Large headlands, unavoidable tidal gates, sections of coastline where landings would not be possible or would be hazardous, committing sections of coastline.

Wind (Beaufort):	F0-5
Sea State (Met Éireann):	Moderate (1.25 - 2.5m significant wave height) swell of 1.25 to 2.50 metres
Surf:	≤ 1.5m broken waves/surf
Flow:	Overfalls, tidal streams and tide races ≥ 3kn
Coastal Environment:	The following may exist, in combination with several of the above: Clapotis, wind against tide, strong tidal currents, local anomalies, sea breeze effect, katabatic effects, downwind paddling, interaction between swell and shoreline.
Open Crossings:	Open crossings where the destination is out of sight.

SHORE BASED TRIP PLANNING

- I can plan and plot trips such as:
  A. Open crossing of more than five hours duration on a chart.
  B. A circumnavigation of an island or offshore lighthouse.
  C. A multi day camping expedition.

These trip plans must include the following information:

- Start, finish points
- Length of crossing
- Estimated duration of the trip/ crossing
- Waypoints
- Distance between waypoints.
- Tidal Flow
- Course to Steer between waypoints (vectors)
- Areas where the potential for dynamic water is high
- Crux points
- Estimated position at various times in your trip
- Group Tactics: e.g. rest points/ fog/ sea sickness/injury/movement
- Communication factors such as Shore contact
- Weather / Wind & Swell Forecast
- Tidal coefficient, moon phase, tide turn time, slack water, high & low water.
- Size of and experience of group
- Equipment factors and food and water supplies
- Emergency back-up plan including Search and Rescue as well as evacuation considerations
- Rendezvous points (RV) point in case of split group

- I can apply information from tidal diamonds and tidal curves to calculate tidal flows and depths at specific times and locations, integrating this data into trip plans.
- I can identify tidal gates and plan routes that optimise passage through these areas.
- I can use a digital electronic navigation tool to plan a course and use it to set waypoints along a course.
- I can prepare a brief risk assessment outlining the unique hazards and risks associated with a trip plan. I can explain how changes in the various elements of the trip will affect the risk assessment.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

- I have reflected upon the concept of a personal sustainability ethic to govern my sea kayaking and have begun to develop my own.
- I can identify a number of different species in the littoral environment – birds, cetaceans, crustaceans and macro algae (seaweed), some seashore wild plants and their habitats.
- I can identify the seasons when sensitivity to the seashore is paramount for a variety of flora and fauna.
- I engage with environmental Gov/NGO citizen science projects and report sightings/activity relating to the coastal environment and I can explain to my paddling group how to contribute to them.
- I can advise other sea kayakers about the ethical purchase of equipment to help protect the environment.
- I can apply Leave No Trace principles when planning and undertaking a trip/ expedition.
- I am aware of my proximity to marine animals and plants and of my influence on their wellbeing. I abide by regulations governing human interaction with marine wildlife such as birds, cetaceans, seals and basking sharks.

NAVIGATING ON THE WATER

- I can communicate an effective and clear shore brief to a group of paddlers incorporating SHEETSS* or similar briefing tools.
- I can generate and determine a bearing on a map from the deck of the sea kayak in active conditions.
- I can estimate my position on the water using a 3 point fix and mark this position on a chart.
- I can adjust my course to steer to allow for leeway and tide both from information obtained from a chart/almanac/sailing directions and from sound judgement.
- I can adjust the time calculated between waypoints to allow for changes in speed due to conditions encountered while on the water.
- I can paddle in poor visibility (night-time included) and navigate to specific waypoints effectively.
- I can communicate effectively with other water users/port authorities while paddling in areas of marine traffic.
- I am conversant with the use of electronic navigation tools.
- I can use and apply digital methods as well as environmental indicators to locate my position on a chart.
- I can identify a variety of navigation lights and use them to locate myself on a chart.
- I can observe and communicate with members of my paddling group on the water, and make effective decisions about the progress of the trip based on my observations. Changing the original trip plan when necessary.

***SHEETSS:** **S**afety & Signals, **H**uman factors, **E**quipment, **E**nvironment, **T**imings, **S**ustainability, **S**afe to go

TEAM RESCUES

NOTE: The L5 paddler is expected to be able to perform all rescues as specified at L4 Adventure award. In addition:

- I can demonstrate the application of recognised protocols (STIG, STOP, SAFER, PRTTGH)* as appropriate in any rescue I undertake.
- I can coordinate the paddling team to complete the rescue of a swimmer and multiple swimmers while recovering all equipment in active / confined areas.
- I can recover and drain a swamped kayak with flooded hatches in active conditions. Assistance may be sought….?
- I can perform rescue of a swimmer and capsized kayak laden with equipment.
- I am competent at swimming in confined rocky areas in swell, I can receive a throw line and can enter and exit the water from a rocky shore safely.
- I can self-rescue in active conditions.
- I can demonstrate technical ability and good communication with my team to manage a damaged boat or a casualty in realistic conditions for the purposes of repair or further care.

* **STIG:** **S**elf, **T**eam, **I**ndividual, **G**ear
STOP: **S**top, **T**hink, **O**rganise, **P**erform.
SAFER: **S**top, **A**ssess, **F**ormulate, **E**xecute, **R**eview
PRTTGH: **P**reach, **R**each, **T**hrow, **T**ow, **G**o, **H**eli

TEAM RESCUES

Tow Line Skills

- I can demonstrate appropriate tow rope technique and towing management in active conditions.
- I can demonstrate efficient use of a throwline to recover an active swimmer from a confined area.
- I can demonstrate effective teamwork and appropriate use of a tow line to perform a swim landing and re-launch.
- I can discuss the risks associated with surf zone rescues and can employ a range of techniques as appropriate to the conditions.
- I can disconnect my, or another paddler's tow in active conditions.
- I can demonstrate the quick release and recovery of a tow while under load.

Craft, Training, Assessment and Certification

Craft: A seaworthy sit-in sea kayak of adequate buoyancy, fitted with deck lines (perimeter lines) fore and aft, a minimum of two bulkheads, minimum of two hatches and a minimum length of 435cm/14 '6". The hull shape must be conducive to edge-turning and pivot turns required at this level. Skegs and rudders are acceptable when used as appropriate. Your kayak must be capable of carrying the full complement of safety and rescue equipment as required for this level.

Training course entry requirements:

- Sea Kayak Level 4 Adventure Award certificate (or equivalent).
- Obtain a Canoeing Ireland Level 5 Horizon Award Paddler Profile from canoe.ie, or their instructor before attending training.
- Must be a current member of Canoeing Ireland.
- Be at least 18 years of age.

Duration of training course (indicative guidelines): The training course will be 2 days plus one evening and include a reduced visibility/ night navigation session. It is recommended that the paddler will undergo a consolidation period post training course (minimum 6 months - maximum recommended 2 years) before presenting for assessment.

Assessment:

Entry Requirements

- Completion of a two and a half day L5 Horizon Award training course.
- Canoeing Ireland Advanced Navigation Certificate or equivalent.
- Short Range Certificate (SRC) for VHF operators.
- Remote Emergency Care Level 3 First Aid Award (in date) or similar or higher.

Please note: Before attending for assessment, candidates must hold The Short Range Certificate (SRC) for VHF operators. This course is accredited by the Irish Department of Transport and is the minimum qualification required for use of VHF radios on boats / kayaks in coastal or inland waterways.

The assessment will take place over two days and one evening. There should be where possible, a minimum of two Level 5 instructors present. The location will be agreed prior to assessment based on the forecast conditions. Feedback on a paddler's skills, knowledge and competence will be provided. If the paddler is 'not there yet' in any module they will be advised on how to improve their performance and the pathway to completion.
The assessment will include the following components:

- Submission of paddler profile.
- An equipment check: All equipment must be shown (see L5 Horizon Award equipment list on canoe.ie)
- In a shore-based session, candidates will prepare an offshore trip.
- A theory test based on the questions shared during the training course covering a wide range of sea kayaking knowledge around safety, environment navigation and technique.
- Candidates will be expected to discuss their answers to the theory test during the face to face assessment day.
- Practical skills session based on the Level 5 skills modules
- Feedback

Certification: When all the required L5 sections of your Paddler Profile have been successfully assessed by your instructor/s, they will then process the Sea Kayak L5 Horizon Award certification for you.