

Leeds University Union Canoe Club

# Safety Documentation

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## Code of Practice

### 1. General

- 1.1 All relevant information should be made available to all club members via appropriate means. This includes, but is not limited to, it being displayed in the equipment store and on the club website. Relevant information includes the participation statement; a comprehensive risk assessment; the constitution; the union driver policy and the code of practice.
- 1.2 All members are required to complete the Union membership form, including a section acknowledging that they have read and understood the Code of Practice. No member will be allowed on a trip until they have completed this form.
- 1.3 Non-members may attend pool sessions, where they should be a read the participation statement to which they must verbally agree before participating.
- 1.4 All relevant medical information must be declared, using the medical form, before participation in a club event.
- 1.5 Every University of Leeds registered student participating in any canoe club trips (excluding pool sessions and polo sessions) must be an LUUCC member.
- 1.6 Social events should aim to follow the LUU social guidelines.

### 2. Equipment

- 2.1. On official club trips the club can provide: a kayak, a helmet, a spray-deck, a paddle and PFD (to members) as appropriate.
- 2.2. Equipment can be hired in accordance with LUUCC equipment hire policy
- 2.3. Any item which is deemed unsafe must be withdrawn from use and destroyed.
- 2.4. No member shall paddle without wearing a CE (or foreign equivalent) approved PFD and helmet.
- 2.5. It is up to individual participants to provide other equipment (such as suitable clothing and footwear)
- 2.6. Keys to the equipment store are held by the club captain. At their discretion the club captain may provide other members with access to these keys for the purposes of retrieving equipment from the store. Possession of keys does not indicate experience or give authorization to use club equipment.
- 2.7. No member may use privately owned equipment from the store without the express and prior permission of the owner.
- 2.8. A member responsible for damage to equipment may be held responsible for its repair or replacement at the discretion of the committee.

### 3. Members

- 3.1. Members should read the participation statement.
- 3.2. Members should read the risk assessment.
- 3.3. It is mandatory for participants to attend at least 1 pool session and complete a swim test prior to going on a trip. Swim tests must be repeated each academic year.

#### **4. Trips**

- 4.1. In the event of a major incident:
  - 4.1.1. The trip or river leader must contact the appointed home contact and then complete an Accident Report Form and send it into the ARC as soon as is feasible on the clubs return to Leeds
  - 4.1.2. No member may make contact with the press or any other media representative. All media representatives must be referred to the communications team in accordance with University policy.
  - 4.1.3. The correct incident procedure should be followed.
- 4.2. No member shall paddle alone. A group of three is the minimum.
- 4.3. It is the responsibility of the trip leader to ensure that there are enough river leaders within each group taking to the water for the safe running of the trip.
- 4.4. If a river leader or participant is not happy with the group setup they should discuss a solution with the trip leader. This may include restricting numbers who take to the water.
- 4.5. Trip/River leaders need not have qualifications, but must have suitable experience.
- 4.6. The committee or trip/river leaders may refuse a member a place on a trip if they feel the person is not capable of participating safely in the planned activity.

#### **5. Transport**

- 5.1. When travelling on a canoe club trip the decision of the driver (including when to stop/break) is final.
- 5.2. Drivers must have the appropriate level of insurance on any vehicle (private or hired) they are driving.
- 5.3. All drivers must adhere to the unions driving policy.

All members should use common sense and discretion in any paddling situation, particularly in any case not covered by the Code of Practice.

## Safety Guidelines for Canoeing Activities

### Participation Statement

All participants should be made aware of, and agree to, the following before being allowed to take part in any trip.

*“Canoeing and Kayaking are “Assumed risk” “Water contact sports” that may carry attendant risks. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks, and be responsible for their own action and involvement”.*

### Safety

It should be noted that safety is not just a word, it is a way of life.

Safety in canoeing derives from:

- Identifying the hazard
- Relating the hazard to the participants
- Determining Risk
- Managing the activity so that the risk is minimised

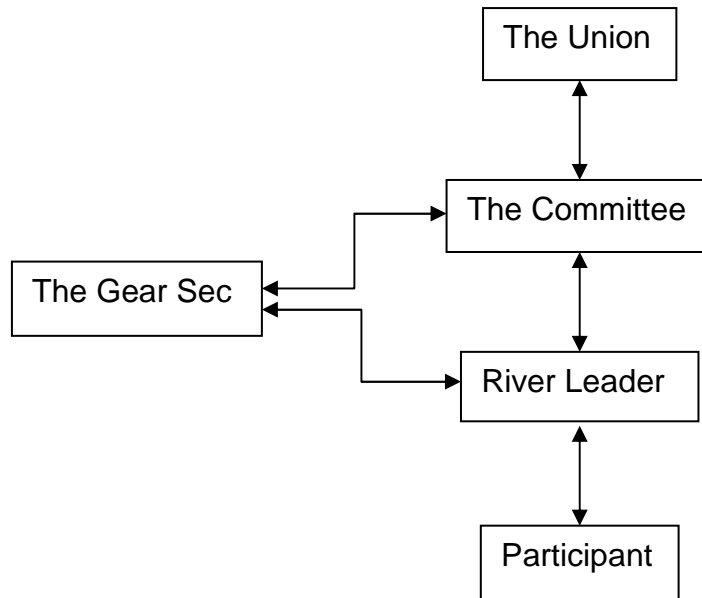
There are two important aspects to ensuring safe practice in canoeing activities

1. That all river leaders are trained and competent
2. That there is a framework of practice and procedure in place within which all members can exercise proper judgement to meet the needs of all participants

### Responsibility of good practice

The overall responsibility for safety with LUUCC lies with the committee specifically the Captain and Gear and Safety Officer. Within the club different members have responsibility for different things, as detailed below. It should be remembered that responsibility goes both ways.

## Lines of Responsibility



1. The Committee
  - 1.1. Implementation of and monitoring of safety policy.
  - 1.2. Appropriate training and development of river leaders.
  - 1.3. Advising river leaders of their responsibilities whilst on the river.
  - 1.4. Advising the Gear and Safety Secretary of any change in Union policy.
  - 1.5. To the Union to adhere to the relevant policies.
  
2. River Leaders
  - 2.1. Gathering relevant information from participants (esp. Medical).
  - 2.2. To the committee for the safe running of trips, in accordance with the guidelines laid out.
  - 2.3. To the participant to ensure the trip is both safe and enjoyable.
  - 2.4. To the Gear Sec to report any damaged equipment and to report on ongoing risk assessments.
  
3. Gear Sec
  - 3.1. To the River Leader to ensure that all equipment is well maintained, safe and appropriate to the trip.
  - 3.2. To the Committee as detailed in the constitution

## **General Risk Assessment Information**

Canoeing and Kayaking carry attendant risks, of which the participant should be aware of. The purpose of a risk assessment is to allow the participant to be aware of these risks and their consequences, and the measures that may be taken to ensure that these risks are minimised.

An assessment of risk is nothing more than a careful examination of what, during canoeing activity, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you've taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt, or becomes ill and the activity is completed in the safest possible way.

In order to assist in the construction of a risk assessment, we first define the terms **hazard** and **risk**.

- A **hazard** is anything that has the potential to cause harm.
- A **risk** is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by the identified hazard, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

There are six steps to risk assessment:

1. Identify the hazards
2. Assess the risks arising from the identified hazards
3. Evaluate who is at risk, when and how
4. Assess and evaluate means of avoiding the hazard and/or minimizing or eliminating the risk
5. Record your findings
6. Review your assessment

It is acknowledged that there are also site-specific hazards that are not dealt with in this document, and should be assessed by a competent person, or persons, before beginning the activity.

## Risk Assessment

A first Aid kit must be carried by the trip leader and all river leaders on all trips. The carrying of a first aid kit and the appropriate training of how to use it may be considered a control measure for all of the hazards stated below.

It should also be noted that incorrect use of safety equipment is potentially very dangerous, as such only group members who are proficient in the use of safety equipment should attempt to use it.

## General Canoeing

Hazard	Risk (L=low, M=Medium, H= High)		Control Measures
	Chance of Occurring	Possible level of harm	
Drowning	L	H	Correct safety equipment used, everyone swim tested, dynamic risk assessments
Effect of weather and/or cold water	H	M	Use of appropriate protective equipment Don't paddle in unsuitable conditions either for the river leader of the group.
Sports Injuries	M	M	A thorough warm up, should be undertaken prior to the beginning of the activity
Manual Handling Injury	M	M	Ensure all group members are familiar with good lifting practice
Slips, Trips and Falls	M	M	All participants should wear suitable footwear for the activity being undertaken
Equipment Specific Hazards	L	H	All equipment used (both private and club) must conform to relevant CE standards Equipment must be checked regularly for damage Appropriate training must be given before equipment is used
Getting lost in remote or unfamiliar areas	L	M	Trip leader must carry a map of the appropriate area. River leaders must be informed of any necessary evacuation options A means of communication (eg a mobile) must be carried by each group.
Organisms, diseases and pollution	L	M	Participants should be made aware of the affect of Weil's disease Participants should be given appropriate advice on how to avoid contamination
Buried and/or sharp objects	L	L	All participants should wear suitable footwear

### Inland White Water River trips

Hazard	Risk (L=low, M=Medium, H= High)		Control Measures
	Chance of Occurring	Possible level of harm	
Currents/Rapids	M	H	Ensure that all members of the group have been fully briefed on the hazards posed by rapids and the action needed to avoid them. All equipment used must be of white water specification. Visual inspection of individual rapids maybe necessary from the bank. If in doubt STOP.
Other river hazards (rocks trees etc)	M	H	Ensure that all members of the group have been fully briefed on the dangers posed by river hazards and the action needed to avoid them. All equipment used must be of white water specification. Visual inspection of individual rapids may be necessary from the bank. If in doubt STOP.
Other river users	M	M	The group should be considerate of other river users and aware of any associated hazards.

### Surf/Sea Kayak Trips

Hazard	Risk (L=low, M=Medium, H= High)		Control Measures
	Chance of Occurring	Possible level of harm	
Other Water Users	H	L	Group members should respect other water users and be aware of the rules of the sea.
Large wave sets	H	L	The groups should be warned of the possibility of large wave sets. The group must only contain paddlers of sufficient ability for the prevailing conditions.
Currents	M	M	Identify hazardous currents to the group (eg rip tides) and explain the appropriate action to take if caught in one of them.
Winds (Offshore and Cross)	M	M	Trip leader to keep aware of the wind and get the group back to shore if the offshore wind becomes too strong. Two landmarks/markers maybe used to keep the group within a pre-defined area.
Tidal Changes	M	M	The trip leader must know the tide times and be aware that time and tide wait for no man. The group should be briefed on the affects of the changing tides.

### Swimming Pool Hazards

Hazard	Risk (L=low, M=Medium, H= High)		Control Measures
	Chance of Occurring	Possible level of harm	
Getting trapped in kayak	M	H	Ensure appropriate supervision at all times.
Slippery floors	M	M	Obey pool rules.
Swimming related hazards	L	L	Ensure that a qualified lifeguard is on duty at all times during the session.

### Canoe Polo Hazards

Hazard	Risk (L=low, M=Medium, H= High)		Control Measures
	Chance of Occurring	Possible level of harm	
Impact injuries	M	M	Ensure all players are aware of the rules (particularly those involving safety). Avoid dangerous play. All players should wear appropriate equipment as specified in the rules of the game.

### Transport Hazards

Hazard	Risk (L=low, M=Medium, H= High)		Control Measures
	Chance of Occurring	Possible level of harm	
Collisions	M	H	Seat belts worn by all passengers. Drivers must take sufficient breaks so as to avoid driving whilst tired. Drivers should not drink alcohol prior to driving. The highway code must be followed.
Inappropriate transportation of boats	L	H	Boats must be securely tied onto roof rack or stowed securely in van. Boats which extend to the length of the vehicle should have a brightly coloured flag tied to their ends. Vehicles must not be overloaded.

**Prevention is always better than cure. However, accidents do happen, some of which are unavoidable.**

When leading a canoeing session it is important to remain alert at all times. By doing this it should be possible to recognise a situation developing before it actually occurs. If an incident does occur, all participants must remember that they have a responsibility not only for the people involved in the incident but also to themselves and the rest of the group. **ASSESS** the situation. Look for and assess further danger, try to get a complete picture of the situation and **formulate** an action plan.

**ACTION** can be taken in any way you deem necessary to resolve the situation as quickly as possible.

**REASSESS** the situation. Has anything changed? What needs to be done next? If necessary take further action.

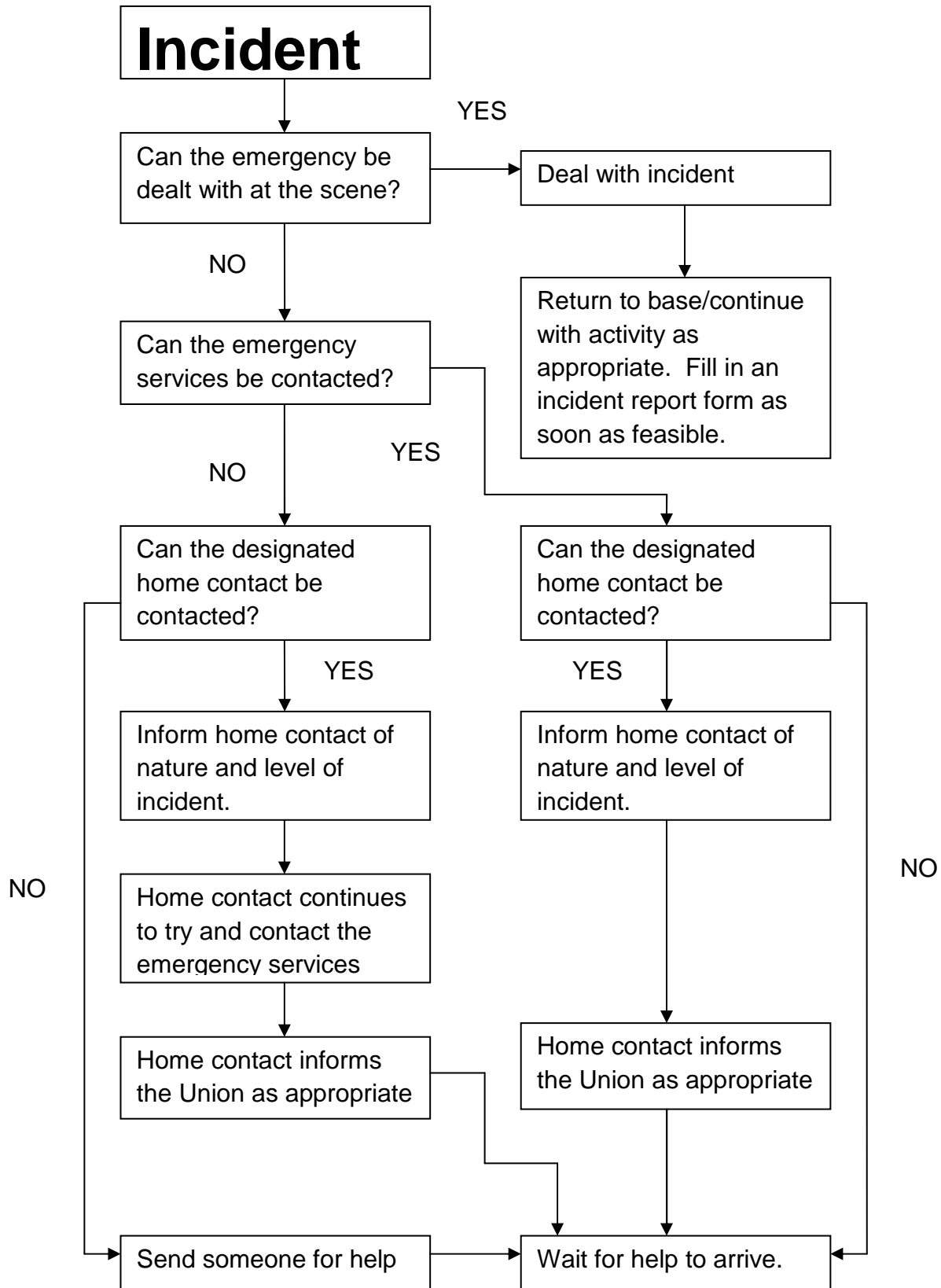
In some cases it may be necessary to provide **AFTER CARE** to members of the group involved. In all situations it is important to **EVALUATE** your own action. How did it go? What did you do? When, Where and Why?

The club president will want a **REPORT** of any incidents (where a participant is injured, or involved in a near miss) that occur during the course of an activity.

## Safety Processes.

1. Prior to trip
  - 1.1. Check weather forecast
  - 1.2. Get approval from Club Captain or Gear and Safety Secretary, with regards to proposed destination and river leaders.
  - 1.3. Inform home contact of plans
  - 1.4. Complete trip register for all participants
  - 1.5. Distribute home contact info to all river leaders
  
2. Equipment to be taken on all trips.
  - 2.1. Group Safety Equipment (responsibility of River Leader)
    - 2.1.1. First Aid Kit
    - 2.1.2. Group Shelter/Foil Blanket
    - 2.1.3. Throwline & Knife
    - 2.1.4. Karabiner and Sling
    - 2.1.5. Communication Equipment
    - 2.1.6. Map covering the appropriate area
    - 2.1.7. Home contact details
  - 2.2. Individual Equipment
    - 2.2.1. Helmet
    - 2.2.2. PFD
    - 2.2.3. Suitable footwear
    - 2.2.4. Suitable clothing
    - 2.2.5. Spray deck
  
3. General Safety Procedures
  - 3.1. Helmets must be worn by all participants and river leaders on all white water and surf trips. If a participant brings his/her own helmet it must be approved by the river leader before use.
  - 3.2. A PFD must be worn by all participants and river leaders. If a participant brings his/her own PFD it must be approved by the river leader before use.
  - 3.3. Participants must have been to at least one pool session and completed a swim test.
  - 3.4. River leaders must brief their group at the start of the trip
  - 3.5. The river leader is responsible for making sure that everyone in the group is accounted for at the end of the trip. The trip leader is responsible for checking that each group has no-one unaccounted for.
  
4. Equipment Checks Prior to Trip
  - 4.1. Equipment checked as appropriate
  - 4.2. Helmets fitted correctly
  - 4.3. PFDs appropriate sizes and worn correctly
  
5. Upon return to Leeds
  - 5.1. All equipment put away in the correct place.
  - 5.2. Any damaged equipment reported to Trip Leader, who will inform the Gear and Safety Secretary.
  - 5.3. Incident report form completed and ARC informed where necessary.

**Incident Procedure**



## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Definitions

**Trip Leader:** The person with overall responsibility for the trip. They need not be the most experienced or able paddler, if this is the case it is likely that they will delegate each of their various responsibilities to more experienced persons.

**River Leader:** Any person who has the experience and ability to lead on a given river. River Leaders will vary from river to river. Being a river leader on one river does not automatically imply that the person is a river leader on all rivers. River leaders must also hold a valid and up to date first aid certificate.

**Competent Paddler:** Any person who has the ability and experience to paddle on a given river in a safe manner, without input from a river leader.

**Participant:** Anyone on a trip who does not fit into one of the previous three categories.

**Home Contact:** A person, not on the given trip, who has full details about the trip. Full details means a complete register of everyone on the trip (and access to relevant medical details) and a copy of the intended itinerary for the trip (along with any possible alterations)

**Trip:** Any canoe club event. For the purposes of this document a trip maybe, but is not limited to, a weekend away, a day event or any session in a swimming pool.

### Appendix 2: Details of where to find relevant materials.

Leeds University Union Driver Policy:

<http://leeds.ukmsl.com/pageassets/clubsandsocieties/safety/Driver-Policy.pdf>

Driver Registration Form

[http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/pageassets/clubsandsocieties/documents/authoriseddriver\\_applicationandcommitmentform.pdf](http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/pageassets/clubsandsocieties/documents/authoriseddriver_applicationandcommitmentform.pdf)

Private Vehicle Registration Form

[http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/pageassets/clubsandsocieties/documents/privatevehicleuse\\_registrationform.pdf](http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/pageassets/clubsandsocieties/documents/privatevehicleuse_registrationform.pdf)

University Accident Standards Policy

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/safety/accidents/standards.htm>

LUUCC Hire Terms and Conditions

<http://luucc.liquidsatisfaction.com/main/information/hireterms.pdf>

### Appendix 3: Kit Check Details

Item of Equipment	Part of Equipment	Details	Frequency
PFD	Buckle	Check that it's not cracked, still functions	Every use
	Straps	Check that they're not frayed/broken	Every use
	Foam	Visual check, It's not visible, Still in the correct number of pieces	Every use
	Foam	Floatation test	Yearly
Helmet	Main Body	Check for cracks/Other damage	Every use
	Straps	Check that they're not frayed/broken	Every use
	Buckle	Check that it's not cracked and still functions	Every use
Kayak	Grab Handle	Attached at both Ends, Not broken/cracked/frayed	Every use
	Drain Bung	Still in place	Every use
	Plastic	No major gauges/cracks. Not too flexible	Every use
	Airbags	Both present, still inflatable	Every use
	Central Buoyancy	Both ends present, Secure	Every use
	Kayak	Correctly stored	Every use
Spray Deck	Grab Handle	Still attached securely	Every use
Paddle	Blade	Securely attached to shaft	Every use
Throwline	Line	Line free of grit, not frayed or worn	Monthly
	Bag	Securely attached to line	Monthly
First Aid Kit	Contents	Sterile equipment in date, and fully equipped	Monthly
	Bag	Watertight	Monthly
Group Shelter	Bag	Watertight	Monthly
	Shelter	Not damaged by damp storage	Monthly

“Every use” means that the equipment should be checked every time it is used. All other frequencies are as stated. Any equipment not checked under “every use” checking must be checked annually.

“Every use” checks are the responsibility of the trip leader. All other checks are the responsibility of the Gear and Safety Secretary.

Once checks have been completed they must be signed off, on the correct sheet in the gear folder – which is kept in the equipment store.

Any equipment which fails the checks must be put out of commission pending assessment by the Gear and Safety Secretary. Any equipment which cannot be fixed to meet the required standards must be destroyed.

Appendix 4: Medical Form

Leeds University Union Canoe Club Medical form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: I am registered with Leeds Student Medical Practice  
 I am registered elsewhere (Please give details below)

Please read the following questions carefully. If you answer yes to any of them, then please give further details in the space below. Please also give details of any other medical conditions or significant disabilities that might be relevant. No condition will prevent you from participating and all details will be kept in strict confidence. LUUCC needs to have a copy of relevant medical history on file to conform to our risk assessment.

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| Have you ever been hospitalised?  | Y/N |
| Have you ever had surgery?  | Y/N |
| Do you have any allergies?  | Y/N |
| Do you have epilepsy?   | Y/N |
| Do you have diabetes?   | Y/N |
| Do you have asthma?   | Y/N |
| Are you currently taking any prescribed medication (except the contraceptive pill)? | Y/N |
| Have you ever been dizzy during or after exercise?                                  | Y/N |
| Do you have a heart murmur or any other heart problems?                             | Y/N |
| Have you ever had a seizure?  | Y/N |
| Have you ever broken a bone or dislocated a joint?                                  | Y/N |

Details here: (Continue on the reverse of necessary)

I have completed this form to the best of my ability. I have also completed a swim test and have read and understood the participation statement.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_