



Beach paddling / bathing – Operational procedures

Staffing & Ratios

Experienced in group management in aquatic environments. Specific knowledge of tidal environments.

Instructors working alone must have an effective way of communicating with the centre base.

Weather limitations

Site specific risk assessments must identify limits to state of tide, strength of tide, any specific currents or beach hazards such as soft ground, steep shelves, underwater hazards, rocks, seaweed etc.

Instructors must have an up to date weather forecast, have checked the tide and be aware of the local tidal conditions. On arrival at the shore instructors must check the water temperature & surf conditions and ensure that participants have suitable clothing both for going into the water and for after the paddling / bathing session.

No participants are to be allowed in water that is above their waist. This includes waves / surf.

The instructor must be aware of the swimming abilities of all participants.

The paddling / bathing area must be clearly defined.

At least one instructor / responsible adult must remain out of the water in a position to clearly observe the paddling / bathing area at all times.

Regular head counts must be made.

Venues

Borth / Ynys Las [away from the point]

Aberdyfi [outside the estuary / beyond the edge of the bar]

Any suitable area after site specific risk assessment

General Procedures

Before the start of any session, instructors must be fully aware of any medical conditions that may affect participation, the swimming ability of all group members, and any specific requirements of the group.

Instructors must set strict limits on the paddling / bathing area, and clearly brief the group in terms of depth limits.

Instructors must have access to a throw line for use in emergency.

Ensure you brief the group fully. Your briefing must include;

- Activity description / goals
- Safety rules
- Limits of paddling / bathing area
- What to do in case of an emergency
- Signals to leave the water
- Behaviour in the water.

Instructors must monitor the state of the tide, the state of the swell / surf, the strength of the backwash and the weather conditions throughout the session. Instructors must monitor and control any movement along the shoreline due to currents / drift.

Brenin Adventures

Instructors must be sure they have complete control of all participants across the whole paddling / bathing area at all times. If there is any uncertainty either the area or the number of active participants must be reduced, or the activity suspended / ended.

Group control is very important. Any supporting adult needs to understand the site specific risks and their role & responsibilities.

The risk assessment must be reviewed on arrival on site to take into account prevailing conditions and recent changes, and monitored throughout the activity session.

Risk factor	Control
Hypothermia / exposure	Appropriate clothing Modification of session to account for air / water temperature and group / individual ability Warm clothing available
Tide	Check tides Site / time specific assessment of tide strength & pattern Throw line
Swell / Surf	Operation only in sheltered locations and calm conditions Instructors must have awareness of 'rip tides'
Currents	Appropriate location Monitor drift
Sharp stones / rocks / objects	Appropriate location
Soft ground	Appropriate location
Poor communications	Briefing Use of agreed signals where noise prevents clear communication