



PADDLESPOUT RISK ASSESSMENT
BRISTOL FLOATING HARBOUR

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Adventure sports such as stand up paddleboarding contain elements of real risk and SUP Bristol Ltd cannot eliminate these risks without undermining the adventure experience or the reason for taking part. However, certain risks have been identified and control measures put in place to reduce these risks. Furthermore, dynamic risk assessments are carried out to take account of weather conditions on the day and participant skill and experience.

Risk assessments are reviewed annually and following any accidents and incidents. This document is to be read in conjunction with the following documents:

[000 SUP Bristol Handbook](#)

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to reduce the risk?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Residual risk
Slips, trips and falls	Staff and clients Trip walking on harbourside, trip on pontoon, slip on slipway	- Verbal briefing, suitable footwear recommended on land, supervision, briefed to avoid slipway, adults choosing to walk barefoot made aware of risk of glass by instructor - Under 18s to wear suitable footwear at all times	Dynamic risk assessment	Instructor	During session	Low
Injury lifting equipment	Staff and clients Staff taught manual handling techniques	- Staff taught manual handling techniques - Clients briefed on correct carrying of equipment - Clients briefed on carrying equipment in the wind	- Dynamic risk assessment - Care to be taken in windy conditions when setting up for sessions	Instructor	During session	Low
Collision with motor vehicle	Staff and clients Collision when setting boards out, briefing or walking to/from the store/toilets	Supervision during briefing, staff trained to be aware while setting out boards and walking through car park	Dynamic risk assessment	instructor	Before and after session	Low

Collisions	Staff, clients, the public Collision with powerboats, sailing boats, ferries, rowers, harbour walls, pontoon	• Ensure good group management • Set boundaries • Follow ratios in handbook • SUP participants briefed to kneel a board's length away from harbour walls • Teach giving way to other water traffic • Launching and landing from knees (SUP)	• Dynamic risk assessment • Instructor vigilance during launching and landing	Instructor	During activity	Low
Entanglement	Staff, clients, the public Fishing lines, leashes, other boats	• Keep group away from anglers • Avoid areas of flow • Consider removing leashes in low wind conditions with groups of young people • Avoid areas of busy water traffic where entanglement is a possibility	• Dynamic risk assessment	Instructor	During activity	Low
Illness	Clients Pre-existing medical issues	• Signed acceptance of risk form declaring pre-existing medical conditions	• Verbal check of pre-existing medical issue • Dynamic risk assessment whether to continue with the session • Medication carried in instructor kitbag	Instructor	During activity	Low
Separation from group	Clients Equipment failure, group separated by wind	• Good group management • Ratios defined in handbook • Use of leashes • Check weather forecast, choose appropriate wind conditions for the experience of the group and the level of the instructor	• Dynamic risk assessment based on changing conditions on day, and instructor and group experience	Instructor	During activity	Low
Water borne disease / infection	Staff and clients Illness and infection of cuts	• Water quality monitored • Extra precautions taken if water quality is 'poor' • Staff first aid trained	• Dynamic risk assessment based on water quality and recent rainfall, vigilance, clean and cover cuts	Instructor	During activity	Low
Drowning	Staff and clients Head injury, poor swimming ability or water confidence	• A PFD and/or leash must be worn at all times • PFDs for beginners • PFDs for all under 18s • Leashes worn (except where a dynamic risk assessment mitigates their use – eg games with young people in very sheltered conditions) • Ensure conditions suitable for experience of instructor • Check acceptance of risk forms for water confidence	• Dynamic risk assessment and vigilance during the session. • Verbal check of medical conditions prior to activity	Instructor	During activity	Low

		Participants are asked to disclose appropriate medical or psychological risk factors and water confidence prior to session				
Boat wake	Staff and clients, other water users Falling, impact injury, head injury, foot/lower leg injury	- SUP – Teach correct falling technique - SUP – Teach to go to knees in shallow areas - Instructor awareness	Dynamic risk assessment and vigilance during session	Instructor	During activity	Low
Equipment failure	Staff and clients Deflated board (SUP), broken paddle, separation from board (SUP)	Equipment checked in line with schedule in manual	Visual check when setting out equipment	Instructor	Prior to session	Low
Cold water shock	Staff and clients Falling into cold water, immersion, panic	- Clients briefed on what to do if they capsize/fall in - Beginners to wear PFDs - Supervision - Suitable equipment provided for water and air temperature - Water confidence checked prior to paddling	Dynamic risk assessment and good supervision	Instructor	During activity	Low
Heat related injuries	Staff and clients Overheating, sunburn, heatstroke, hypothermia, dehydration	- Suitable equipment provided for water and air temperature - Showers available - Pre-course literature and briefing mentions protection from heat/cold and hydration	Dynamic risk assessment and good supervision	Instructor	During activity	Low
Effects of alcohol	Clients Impaired decision making, poor coordination	- Briefed in pre-event communication - Instructor vigilance at briefing - Zero tolerance approach	Dynamic risk assessment. Instructor empowered to refuse activity	Instructor	During activity	Low
Sharps / needles	Clients and staff Needle stick injury	- Check area around pontoon before session - Shoes recommended whilst walking on land - Verbal reminder to any adults choosing to barefoot - Under 18s to wear footwear at all times	Staff to perform sweep of briefing and pontoon area at start of day	Instructor	Prior to activity	Low
Pregnancy	Pregnant clients Damage to unborn baby due to falling or waterborne infection	- Accept only confident swimmers and active people - Fully explain risks in email prior to session where possible - Explain that a change in weight distribution may cause imbalance	Dynamic risk assessment and good supervision	Instructor	During activity	Low

		• Check water quality • Instructors to offer stable board • Buoyancy aids to be worn				
Underwater hazards	Staff and clients Foot or lower leg injuries, falling on objects	• Choose locations away from hazards • Instructor monitor for submerged hazards • Teach students to be aware of potential hazards • Teach students boundaries of activity area	• Dynamic risk assessment and good supervision	Instructor	During activity	Low
Sluices and weirs	Staff and clients Sucked through sluice	• Avoid Underfall Yard exclusion zone • Avoid junction lock when sluices running • Avoid weir at Netham	• Dynamic risk assessment and good supervision	Instructor	During activity	Low