



Technical Syllabus

Environmental remit of the NCC Guide Award

The candidate is required to perform all skills in up to sea states at the maximum environmental remit of a 1m swell at a 15 second period, (in relation to the venue), comfortably and with confidence in their own ability. There must be minimum conditions found within the course to test all of the criteria.

If the maximum conditions have not been experienced, then the trainer can simulate them where reasonable. If it is not possible to train in up to maximum conditions, the assessor can only give the award as an 'Aspirant Guide Training in Calm Conditions', recommending further application of skills learnt in the top end of the remit another time.

Part A – Personal Coasteering Skills

A.1 Swimming in the upper end of the remit over a distance of 200m, in a proactive and continuous manner, this is to be undertaken in full coasteering kit.

Training could include a variety of ways to do this so that the swimmer can swim the distance, whilst taking safety equipment with them.

A.2 Entering and Exiting in a range of areas at the upper end of the remit.

Sharing of techniques to enable safe entry and egress on wave-washed ledges, murky water, steep climbing exits, and through plunging waves.

A.3 Be fit and healthy enough to operate at the upper end of the remit for a 3-hour coasteering session.

To show that they are fit for purpose as a coasteering guide and able to deal with a variety of scenarios in this environment and timescale without being a danger to themselves or their group. A Guide may be expected to run 2 coasteering sessions in one day.

A.4 Be confident in their movement over all types of terrain that present themselves such as rocky, steep or slippery ground and features.

To show that they are able to move around confidently, at times at speed over a variety of terrain whilst undertaking the guiding of a group and to demonstrate the ability to coach group members over said ground.

A.5 Make correct decisions about the way that a variety of features can be used, or not, or navigated along the way.

Reading the water to enable others to read how water works over a variety of features, including a pour-over, a funnel, a wash through, and a swirl. Plus, to be confident in how these features work to allow themselves to immerse themselves and play within them. A dynamic risk assessment and judgment is key. E.g. be happy playing in a coasteering 'play spot' that they would manage with a group at the upper end of the remit.



Part B – Rescue Skills

Training should provide Aspirant Guides with a broad awareness of the challenges and problems associated with leading coasteering on the sea.

Training should provide Aspirant Guides with simple solutions to common problems that they may encounter whilst coasteering. This should include undertaking dynamic risk assessments for them and the group they are coasteering with. Training should give the Aspirant Guides a broad awareness of the hazards and potential issues that they may come across in the dynamic intertidal coasteering environment.

B.1 Have knowledge of and demonstrate the skilful application of appropriate rescue skills to the upper end of the remit.

Aspirant Guides should work with a range of rescues and be shown how to adapt them to the prevailing conditions and features, including dealing with incapacitated coasteerers.

B.2 Be able to use the group to self-rescue

To be trained to use Assistant Guides and the coasteering group members, where required, to the advantage of enabling a rescue to be executed well if the Guide were to be compromised. Guides may be solo with groups and the need to be able to manage the group to support the session is often required. Training should give Aspirant Guides the chance to discuss and explore solo guiding.

B.3 Be conversant with different methods of towing

To be trained to use a variety of tows in a range of conditions to the upper end of the remit e.g.

Foot tow

Shoulder strap tow

Husky tow

Safety bag tow

Peterson tube tow (only if used by the Provider/Company)

Towline tow (only if used by the Provider/Company)

Towing using a throwline

Anchored tow

Towing the line and not towing the casualty.

The variety of tows should be done over a reasonable distance (100m plus) and include sections of the sea in the upper end of the remit. The Trainer must make coasteerers aware of clean line and quick release methods.

B.4 Be conversant with different methods of using throw lines

Understand how to use a throwline as one of the main sources of rescue devices for most rescues, including throwing rescues and throwline management, reaching rescues, and body belaying in addition to using a throwline to tow.

As well as being able to:

- Re-throw and coil a line
- Anchor a line to cross a zawn
- Use a throwline as a swim line
- Use a throwline to do a simple body belay
- Use others/wider group to help with throwline methods



B.5 Be conversant with the use of Tape/ Sling use to help AVOID problems occurring.

The training should help Aspirant Guides to understand and use this as a method of rescue and or support. Discussion should be had around the advantages and disadvantages of slings vs tapes vs short length of floating rope vs full Throw lines. Length of tape 3- 5 M.

Part C – Safety, Leadership and Group Skills

The training will give Aspirant Guides the chance to explore and discuss all the elements which make up a coasteer. This will involve a variety of skills being used to help make the coasteering session a safe enjoyable learning experience.

C.1 Skilful application of leadership principles

To be aware of when to use robust group strategies such as CLAP, to ensure safe group management at/in an appropriate coasteering site and/or situation.

- Communication
- Line of Sight
- Avoidance
- Position (best place)

C.2 Appropriate leadership strategies, judgement and decision making

To have a range of strategies and leadership styles to suit the Group, Site and Situation which are flexible and clear in their communication and application. These include, but are not restricted to:

- Concise briefings
- Autocratic leadership style
- Democratic leadership style
- Self/Team/Casualty

C.3 Safety awareness and risk management

To follow any strategies to their final point when put in charge of a rescue situation, including being able to execute an EAP (Emergency Action Plan) correctly.

C.4 Working with multiple guides and assistant/2nd guides

The NCC acknowledge that providers have many different models of working dependant on the terrain, environment and types of clients and the training should reflect this. Providers may work as solo guides, assistant guides working with lead guides, multiple guides and use of trip leaders. The training courses will discuss the implications and increased responsibilities of these roles. Emphasis will be placed upon but not limited to the following:

- Supervising assistant guides
- Implications on the supervision of clients
- Role identification and responsibilities
- Trip leader role



C.5 Exercise appropriate group control and management and show concern for the general welfare of other group members

All of the above is about the Aspirant Guide being able to effectively lead a group in conditions up to the upper remit of the NCC Guide Award. The Aspirant Guide should understand the elements that make a coasteer. They should also exercise appropriate group control using a dynamic risk process while managing and showing concern for the general welfare of group members. This will include:

- Welcome
- Medical checks
- Water confidence check
- Environmental/wildlife awareness
- Good group briefings that are concise, short, and appropriate to the stage of the coasteer
- Identifying hazards
- Exits and entries - the guide should be able to show groups methods of entry and exit.
- Swimming techniques in waves and near rocks
- Venue selection
- Choosing suitable routes for the group/conditions including the supervision and guidance, where appropriate with regards to movement on rocky or slippery ground.
- Use of the group where appropriate
- Prompt and suitable decision-making
- Jump Management
- Positioning during communication and pre-empting issues
- Use of signals for communication
- Play Spots
- Emergency exits

It is important that the Aspirant Guide learns how to add to the group dynamic, which enables swift decision-making, clear communications, and positive outcomes.

Training should start to develop the ability to judge the conditions, the route, with the ability of the group (both physically and mentally), to make appropriate decisions along with the need to modify plans as required.

C.6 Demonstrate the capability to manage a range of incidents

Training should look at a wide variety of incidents and enable Aspirant Guides to work on the practical aspects of dealing with the situations, both selecting and using the appropriate equipment. Thus, preparing them to manage any incidents which could occur during the course of a journey.

Training should highlight:

The process of maintaining an overview of the situation so that the safety and well-being of the whole group are never forgotten, including:

- Various strategies for group control, communication, leadership styles and positioning, keeping a group together e.g. group huddle.
- Moving groups in more challenging situations eg rips, waves, caves, zawns, boulder fields.



- Incidents that involve people, e.g. a broken limb, hypothermia, unconsciousness, suspected spinal, stings, foot entrapment, panic, incidents in caves, fishing line etc.
- Incidents that involve rescue in different circumstances and conditions thereby requiring a working knowledge of a variety of approaches which may include the use of the Group and/or Assistant Guide.

The necessity of carrying and having easily accessible equipment:

On Person such as: a throw line, knife, whistle etc. dependant on the location and situation used.

Communication

- A suitable means of summoning help in an emergency in 2 different ways to an outside agency e.g. flares, mobile phone, VHF, PLB etc. depending on the operational area

Essential safety bag*

- A suitable first aid kit and familiarity with the use of its contents whilst in the coasteering environment

C.7 Provide guidance through top tips and handy hints

Training should develop the ability to pass on tips to group members to improve their coasteering ability and confidence, as well as giving sufficient information in order to achieve a successful outcome for the session. For example, the Guide may need to give coasteerers top tips to allow them to travel across a wide gap as a group.

C.8 Be able to connect how we can learn from coasteering activities to the challenges that are threatening our coastlines and communities

Coasteering connects people to nature in ways that are more visceral than many other outdoor activities and provides an opportunity for understanding risk, challenge, and response. The candidate is expected to demonstrate ways of using coasteering and the environment they are moving through to make connections between climate-related sea-level rise, pollution and plastics and personal response to risk. As a result of this, clients will be able to better connect personal action wherever they are, to the protection of the ocean and coastal environment we treasure so deeply. Done well, all education elements to coasteering will enrich the client's experience, not dim it.

Part D – Theory

Training should provide Aspirant Guides with an awareness of potential risks, safety precautions and safety thresholds pertinent to leading groups to the upper end of the remit.

D.1 Equipment, design and maintenance

The Trainer should endeavour to provide Aspirant Guides with knowledge and experience of using a range of equipment including the most up to date. The Trainer should also provide Aspirant Guides with an understanding of how and why modern equipment has evolved, and which equipment best serves the situation. This should allow the Aspirant Guide to decide on the best pieces of equipment for their location and use.

D.2 Safety (includes Coastguard and rescue services)

The candidate will know how the national and local emergency services function.



D.3 Planning weather, waves, and tides

Aspirant Guides should be aware of a variety of sources of weather, wave, and tidal forecasts. Through training, they should be able to interpret weather, wave and tidal forecasts and be mindful of the conditions actually experienced. Enabling them to show an understanding of the impact of weather, tide, and sea on the conditions that they encounter at the venue.

Training should ensure Aspirant Guides have the ability to decide on the correct location for the conditions of the day given all macro and micro forecasts available; the group dynamics; and any external factors i.e. access issues and if necessary go to plan B or C.

D.4 Wellbeing, health and first aid

Linked with sound judgement, Trainers should ensure Aspirant Guides are trained to deal with the most likely injuries that may occur as part of coasteering. It should be evident that Aspirant Guides can deal with an incident and see it safely through to its conclusion (including simple evacuations, dealing with emergency services and group care). This training should complement any other first aid training where it exists. Aspirant Guides should be encouraged to hold a current recognised two-day first-aid certificate.

D.5 Group awareness and management

Training should develop an awareness of the full spectrum of responsibilities whilst being a Coasteering Guide, to the upper remit of the award.

Training should cover:

- National Coastguard Organisations and rescue services
- Personal, legal, and ethical responsibilities.

D.6 General knowledge

Aspirant Guides should have a knowledge and awareness of the development, both current and past of coasteering and the National Coasteering Charter.

D.7 Leadership responsibilities

Aspirant Guides should understand their role and responsibilities as a leader in the intertidal environment.

D.8 Water features and hazard

Training should cover dynamic risk assessments as well as an understanding of hydrology and how to use this while leading in the coasteering environment. This will include, for example, understanding the characteristics of swell, tidal height, and surf on a range of features.

ENVIRONMENT

E.1 A knowledge of codes of conduct/legislation relating to local native marine life and coastline ecology.



Delivery of an NCC Guide Training course:

The training can be run to the requirements of the group and the conditions. It is expected to involve a mixture of classroom learning, professional discussions, and pre-course preparation, with the majority of learning done experientially, in a wetsuit, with the appropriate equipment, practising the scenarios, in the coasteering environment.

This learning will be reviewed and captured at suitable times during the day, with individual feedback given to each guide to help prepare them for assessment.

Course ratios: A maximum of 8 candidates can be trained by one trainer, if the number of candidates goes beyond this, to a maximum of 12 then a second NCC trainer/ Assessor will need to be employed to support the training.

Please refer to the 2-day NCC Guide Sample Training Plan

***For additional notes please refer to the NCC Guide Training Doc V3 2015**

For additional notes regarding environmental impact and education, please see the NCC Guides Code of Conduct

We recommend sitting a WiSE course to upskill your marine environmental knowledge