



Level 4: Swiftwater Rescue

Instructor Criteria

Overview: Fundamentally, we expect that participants will have the paddling skills, technical knowledge, rescue ability, teaching ability, group management, and interpersonal skills commensurate with this level of certification prior to presenting themselves for evaluation as Instructor Candidates at an Instructor Certification Exam (ICE).

Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):

ACA courses are open to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
3. Independently hold head upright without neck / head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket*
8. Get on / off or in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft*
10. Remount or reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
11. Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities and rescues listed in the appropriate Course Outline, and have the ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation*

** To participate in adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve teaching and practicing EEC #7-11.*

Course Prerequisites: Completion of the appropriate level skills course, assessment course, or equivalent skills.

Course Duration: Minimum 5 days (40 hours)

Course Location / Venue: The IDW and ICE will take place on sections of whitewater rivers rated up and including class II-III rapids.

Class Ratio: 12 Instructor Candidates: 1 Instructor Trainer; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 24: 2

Succeeding courses: Level 5: Advanced Swiftwater Rescue

The following is a list of criteria used to evaluate Instructor Candidates. The content covered and sequence of evaluation should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.



Level 4: Swiftwater Rescue

Instructor Criteria

General Requirements for all Instructor Certifications:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Meet the appropriate essential eligibility criteria
- Successfully complete an Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW & ICE)
- Be a full ACA member
- Upon successful completion, register with the Safety Education & Instruction Council
- Have and maintain First Aid and age appropriate CPR
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately perform and teach all of the following material unassisted in the appropriate venue
- Instructors are expected to be able to demonstrate, teach, and model everything on the official ACA skills course and assessment course outlines which correspond to their level/craft.

Demonstrate knowledge and ability to efficiently/effectively plan and implement appropriate instructional sessions and assessments for a different learning styles and ability levels, to include:

- Differentiation of instruction based on the individual learner (student centered)
- Use of an appropriate skills progression when teaching complex skill sets
- Selection of appropriate teaching venue based on ability and desired outcomes
- Focus on core principals rather than specific technique
- Provides appropriate, specific and meaningful feedback

Maintenance Requirements:

- Teach at least two courses that meet ACA standards within the four-year certification period and report the results to the National Office
- Complete an Instructor Update, at the highest level of certification, during the four-year certification period
- Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration annually
- Maintain appropriate CPR and first aid certification for the duration of certification

Level 4: Swiftwater Rescue Instructor Requirements:

- 1) Demonstrate a knowledge of ACA course paperwork and administration:
 - How and when to register & report a course (with and without insurance)
 - An understanding of the ACA Waiver & Release of Liability
- 2) Demonstrate a knowledge of teaching and learning theory:
 - Have an understanding of multiple modalities of teaching and how they impact different learners
 - Differentiate instruction targeting different learners
 - Use effective teaching methods
 - Present information effectively (both prepared and impromptu)



Level 4: Swiftwater Rescue

Instructor Criteria

- 3) Demonstrate the following:
 - Positive interpersonal skills
 - Appropriate group management skills (including leadership and judgment)
 - Ability to choose an appropriate venue/class site for skill development and group scenarios
- 4) Use the [ACA River Safety & Rescue Terminology Handbook](#) to:
 - Identify and explain key safety and rescue skills
 - Evaluate skills and provide effective feedback
 - Effectively make skill assessments
- 5) Demonstrate the ability to effectively and efficiently perform, assess and teach all of the topics and skills listed in the following course outlines:
 - Level 2: Essentials of River Safety & Rescue Skills Course
 - Level 2: Essentials of River Safety & Rescue Skills Assessment
 - Level 3: River Safety & Rescue Skills Course
 - Level 3: River Safety & Rescue Skills Assessment
 - Level 4: Swiftwater Rescue Skills Course
 - Level 4: Swiftwater Rescue Skills Assessment
- 6) In addition to the topics and skills found in the course outlines above, candidates must:
 - Demonstrate effective participation in a v-lower as both a belayer and swimmer.
 - While acting as swimmer in a v-lower, demonstrate the ability to confidently and competently communicate with belay teams via hand signals and release QRHS to self-rescue.
- 7) Demonstrate the ability to develop, and run skill sessions and simulated rescue scenarios that:
 - Model and utilize effective risk management and rescue strategies
 - Highlight essential skills for the course level and venue
 - Are appropriate for the skill and experience level of students
 - Maximum learning outcomes for all students
- 8) Demonstrate leadership, group management skills, experience and judgment necessary to be a safe, effective instructor.
- 9) Demonstrate the ability to competently and confidently paddle chosen craft in the maximum allowable venue for the course level.