

**DESCRIPTION:**

Boating activities on the sea or in inshore coastal waters in powered craft not more than 24 metres in length.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** The Group Leader should have considerable experience of the activity. The person in charge of the craft (skipper) must be licensed in accordance with the Department of Transport Marine Coastguard Agency (MCA). The craft must also conform to one of the four MCA Code of Practice, for different types of Small (up to 24m) Vessels, classified as Yellow / Blue / Brown / Red. Coding defines the qualifications of the crew, how many people the boat can take, how far it can go out to sea and what safety equipment it must carry. The easiest way to check is to ask the operator or skipper when booking. You can also check via the MCA who maintain lists of coded boats by name and port. The operator must also have appropriate insurance cover. It should be noted that marine craft are not required to have more than £3,000,000 liability cover for passengers.

**STAFFING RATIO:** Should as a minimum correspond to the Supervision and Staffing Ratios in the Offsite & Adventurous Activities Manual. In addition the Group Leader must ensure there are always sufficient staff present to manage the group in any circumstance e.g. in the event of a capsizing. There should always be more staff present where the participants are younger. Other factors to be taken into account when considering an appropriate staffing ratio include the capacity and license of the craft, the age and experience of the participants, the location of the activity and the weather conditions. Staffing ratios should exclude the crew in charge of operating the craft.

**PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:** Appropriate waterproof / windproof outer layers, warm clothing, appropriate buoyancy aids and life jackets.

**HAZARDS:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather</li> <li>• Hypothermia</li> <li>• Drowning</li> <li>• Other boating traffic</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sea sickness</li> <li>• Strong flowing water and tides</li> <li>• Physical injuries sustained as a result of falling or stumbling</li> </ul> |
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**GUIDANCE:** The suitability of the boat in question must be determined at the planning stage, including the designed capacity, competence of the skipper and crew and provision of all necessary safety equipment. All relevant and appropriate safety precautions should be taken. Prior to embarkation however, it is for the Group Leader to be satisfied that the prevailing weather conditions and sea state are within safe limits for the vessel, and the age/experience of the participants. The Group Leader may wish to take advice from the Skipper, but the group should not embark on the boat unless the conditions are within safe limits. When on the sea the skipper of the boat has responsibility for all passengers including the participants, and the Group Leader should follow their instructions. Non swimmers should not participate in small boat activities.

**Boat Trips are regarded as a high risk activity and persons wishing to lead this activity must apply direct to Bracknell Forest Council.**

**OTHER INFORMATION:** Dept for Transport guidance on Using Pleasure Craft Safely: [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121015000000/http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/TravelAndTransport/Boatingandtravellingbywater/Usingpleasurecraftsafely/DG\\_185401](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121015000000/http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/TravelAndTransport/Boatingandtravellingbywater/Usingpleasurecraftsafely/DG_185401)

Maritime Coastguard Agency re: Coded Vessels

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/mca/mcga07-home/shipsandcargoes/mcga-shiptype/mcga-pleasurecraftandsmallships/mcga-dqs-cvs-newsletter.htm>