



GUERNSEY
SAILING
TRUST

Risk Assessments 2026



Risk Assessments

General for All Activities:

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
DROWNING	STAFF & STUDENTS	Students must wear lifejackets or buoyancy aids before going afloat or when in the water. All Dinghy Instructors and above are First Aid qualified.
CAPSIZE	STAFF & STUDENTS	All students to be briefed by the instructor in charge on what to do in the event of a capsize, this must include total inversion. No GST staff member will work in a location alone, without consent from the Principal or Chief Instructor. All staff are to be in visual or VHF communication range of another instructor or Coastguard at all times. Larger double handed dinghies to be sailed with mast head floats (unless conditions deemed suitable and when teaching a total inversion) On all keelboats, the keel must remain down while sailing and secured with the keel downhaul. In windy conditions, the instructor may remove the mainsheet from the cleat.
HEAD INJURY	STAFF & STUDENTS	Students are to be made aware before going afloat of the dangers of the boom coming across the boat. Helmets are available if necessary. Staff are to be briefed on dealing with head injuries. The 'Head Injury Flowchart' can be found in all safety packs.
HYPO/HYPER EXPOSURE	STAFF & STUDENTS	All students are briefed on what to wear by the instructor in charge of the group. All appropriate protective clothing will be provided and checked by an instructor before going afloat. All GST Staff are appropriately trained & qualified and are responsible for ensuring they have the correct clothing for themselves before going afloat. Instructors should be aware of weather conditions and forecast; and ensure that the group is appropriately hydrated and monitor the state of all individuals within the group. Instructors should be prepared to stop or have a break during the session.
GROUP CONTROL WHILST AFLOAT & OTHER WATER USERS	STAFF & STUDENTS	All students and instructors will receive a comprehensive safety briefing by the Instructor in charge before going afloat. This will include the sailing area, safety & recall signs, awareness of other water users, any local hazards & weather conditions.

ENTRAPMENT	STAFF & STUDENTS	All GST Instructors are to have access to a knife with a serrated blade to cut a trapped person free of any ropes or harnesses worn. Long hair must be tied back. A knife is located in all Safety Packs found on keelboats, Invictus and powerboats.
STUDENT MEDICAL ISSUES	STUDENTS	All students must fill out a booking form prior to arrival. If under 18 this form must be signed by the students Legal Guardian. All forms are read by the Principal, Chief Instructor or Senior Instructor/Powerboat Instructor in charge. Any issues will be appropriately risk assessed before going afloat and discussed with the course instructors. For School and Youth Groups consent forms and medical conditions will be held by the teacher or group leader. In this case, instructors will ask if there are any conditions they need to be aware of before commencing the session.
SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS	STAFF & STUDENTS	This risk is most apparent on slipways. Students should be briefed on the safest way to move boats on the slipway and care must be taken at all times. Suitable footwear to be worn at all times. Slipway to be appropriately risk assessed by the instructor in charge for condition and sea conditions before going afloat.
CRUSHED FINGERS	STAFF & STUDENTS	All students are to be advised to keep their fingers and hands inside the confines of the boat they are in. Staff should be aware of their hands and student hands at all times when handling boats.
ROAD TRAFFIC	STAFF & STUDENTS	All groups to be briefed and supervised by instructors and school staff. The zebra crossing should be used. An instructor or teacher will act as traffic supervisor.
BOARDING /DEPARTING VESSEL AT SLIPWAY OR PONTOON	STAFF & STUDENTS	Boat to be moored correctly and secured alongside. Brief Students prior to boarding/departing. Help given where necessary, especially if rough weather. Fenders should be used to protect the boats. Extra care and help should be given to avoid falling in the gap this creates.
TRANSFER BETWEEN VESSELS ON WATER	STAFF & STUDENTS	Agree who is in charge or leading the transfer, radio in your intentions. A dynamic risk assessment to be taken at all times. A clear safety briefing must be given to all on the boats, regardless of experience. This must include what is planned, any responsibilities expected of all, with appropriate reminders of any risk including entrapment and slipping.

TRANSFER BETWEEN VESSELS CONT.	STAFF & STUDENTS	Consideration needs to be taken to where and how the boats are being held. The boats should ideally be held using the mooring lines to help prevent accidental trapping of hands (or other) between the hulls. If this is not possible, then there must be consideration of the use of a fender, placed between the boats. Consider if a fender creates other risks, for example a gap between the boats that could cause an entrapment or a slip between the hulls). On larger dinghies and Hawks, there could be other options for holding the boats, for example holding the shrouds. Instructors must consider the following factors: the ability of all persons afloat, the weather and sea conditions, any specific considerations associated with the boats and make a decision about which approach is best.
USING LADDERS	STAFF	Only staff are allowed to use harbour ladders. Staff must use harbour ladders in a calm, slow and sensible way. Best practice is to have three points of contact at all times. Heavy equipment (e.g. fuel) should be transferred to/from the top of the ladder using the ropes provided and not carried up. One person at a time on the ladder. Ladders on Hawk 20s are suitable to get back into the boat from the water, follow above guidance.
USING HARBOUR PONTOONS	STAFF & STUDENTS	Pontoons around the harbour can be used for loading and unloading, including Boatworks, the Cruiseline and Albert Pier. These pontoons are working pontoons and used by the public. Pontoons can be unstable and are affected by sea state. Care should be taken at all times and instructors should brief students appropriately. The pontoons should not be used as a waiting area. When loading: students should be asked to wait at the top of the pontoons until boats are alongside and ready for boarding. When unloading: students should be asked to move off the pontoon in a safe and timely manner.
INFECTION	STAFF & STUDENTS	Cover all cuts/new piercing etc. Rinse any open wounds with fresh water.

Specific Risk Assessment Points

Oppies on the Pond

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
Entrapment on the Pond	STAFF & STUDENTS	Putting a safety boat on the pond would increase the risk to staff and students. Therefore the lead instructor must have access to a serrated knife on their person while teaching. A pond safety pack with a knife and first aid supplies is available to be taken on the pond. Oppies must always be used with a daggerboard in place, even when paddling.

Powerboating

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
WHEN STUDENTS ARE UNDER INSTRUCTION	STAFF & STUDENTS	Instructors should be seated adjacent to the driver with access to the throttle & killcord at all times. The driving student must always wear a killcord. While teaching under 16s (without a PB2 qualification) and Powerability the instructor must be wearing a dual killcord and be prepared to take control of the throttle if necessary. Students must be instructed to helm with 1 hand on the wheel and 1 on the throttle. The engine must be switched off when changing helms and when the killcord is changed between students/instructor; unless this increases the danger, in which case the Instructor must take charge of the throttle during the handover and carefully manage swapping controls..
DRIVER DISLODGED FROM HELM	STAFF & STUDENTS	Killcord/dual killcord is to be worn at all times.
LOOSE EQUIPMENT IN BOAT	STAFF & STUDENTS	All equipment is to be stowed, especially fuel tanks and batteries. The boat must be checked for loose equipment before each use.

MAN OVERBOARD & PEOPLE IN THE WATER	STAFF & STUDENTS	All occupants are instructed to sit & hold on to designated hand holds. When alongside the person/people in water the engine MUST be switched off*. The instructor should helm the vessel whenever possible. *an experienced, competent helm with crew may decide to keep the engine switched on when they consider it safer to do so i.e., hazards in the recovery area. This is a judgement for the skipper. Always switch off where possible. Drivers of safety boats must hold a Powerboat Level 2 certificate and be thoroughly familiar with the boat's operation. While teaching ANY students, drivers must also hold an RYA Dinghy Instructor, RYA Senior Instructor or RYA Safety Boat qualification.
DAMAGING VESSELS IN MARINA	STAFF, STUDENTS & VESSEL	Only the person in charge on the vessel should moor it in the marina (specifically for TJE). For other vessels, the person in charge should make the decision if they are to allow students to moor the boat in the marina, only under strict supervision.
INJURY FROM SHOCK LOADING	STAFF & STUDENTS	Shock can occur when the boat slams into waves, at high speed and low speed. Passengers should be briefed on the sea conditions and risks, along with using hand straps at all times and foot straps (where available). Where possible, upright posture, with the spine in neutral alignment (natural 'S' shape) should be maintained whilst facing in the direction of travel. The briefing should also include how to 'stand' and use bent knees to mitigate any shock. The helm should regularly check the comfort of the passengers in the boat, as the shock will be felt differently across the boat. There is a significantly higher risk of spinal fractures to people seated in the front area of RIBs, regardless of speed.

Nighttime Powerboating

The John Elliott is the only vessel that may be used at night and must be skippered by a Commercially Endorsed Advanced Powerboat Driver.

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
NIGHT TIME OPERATIONS	STAFF & STUDENTS	Instructor to inform VTS of training plans. Instructors to remain in contact with VTS and update them with arrival and departure times of planned locations. VTS to be contacted at the end of the training. Any changes to planned routes must be communicated to VTS as soon as possible.
MAN OVERBOARD AT NIGHT	STAFF & STUDENTS	In addition to points above, Instructors make regular checks of the conditions and welfare of all onboard. Lifejackets with lights to be worn by all crew members. All crew to be seated in view of another crew member.
ADVERSE CONDITIONS	STAFF & STUDENTS	As the Advanced courses may run in adverse conditions, ensure all crew are fully briefed on what to expect, where to sit, how to hold on and are dressed appropriately.
EQUIPMENT FAILURE	VESSEL, STAFF & STUDENTS	All crew briefed on emergency procedures. Full safety kit (according to RYA Advanced courses) to be carried at all times. Crew briefed on use of safety equipment.

RS Venture Connect (Invictus)

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
CAPSIZE & ENTRAPMENT	STAFF & STUDENTS	The RS Venture is a keel boat which is self-righting and will not capsize unless there is catastrophic boat failure, however all students will be briefed by the instructor in charge on what to do in the event of a capsize, this must include total inversion. The keel is locked in place by a pin and a velcro strap. Both of these must be in place at all times while the keel is down. There is a spare velcro strap in the safety pack. Staff are to be in VHF communication range at all times. All GST Instructors are to have access to a knife with a serrated blade to cut a trapped person free of any ropes or harness worn. Students must never be strapped in. There is a knife in Invictus' safety pack, as well as in the safety packs in all Powerboats. A designated safety boat will be in the sailing area at all times she is on the water.
REMOVING AND REPLACING SEATS	STAFF & STUDENTS	When Invictus' is not in use seats must always be left fitted ready for use. Each seat is fixed with two bars beneath them that slot into grooves fixed to the hull. There are a series of grooves and instructors can use the most appropriate for the size of the student. Once the seat is slotted into the grooves, there is a line on the rear bar to be secured in a cleat behind the seat.

Students with disabilities will all have individual needs so it is important to take these into consideration before, during and after the sailing session. Considerations, such as ensuring students have easy access to toilet facilities or do not get too cold, are important. Instructors should ensure they are aware of their students' needs before going afloat, whether this is through a discussion with the student or their carer, in the case of those with learning disabilities.

Guernsey Harbour Hoist

The hoist sling and spreader bar are located in the Instructor Room at the Guernsey Sailing Trust. Staff must be trained before using the hoist.

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
INJURY FROM HOIST	STAFF & STUDENTS	Training must be received from Hoist Instructors (Clare Chapple or Richard Klein) before being used. The hoist operation manual must be read as part of training. Always check the hoist is in good condition and functioning properly before use. Inform Management staff of any concerns. Ensure that the vessel is tied up correctly using springs to position for easy access.

Raft building

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
DROWNING	STAFF & STUDENTS	Instructor training and experience. Assessment of groups' abilities. All participants on or in the water should wear correctly fitted and checked buoyancy aids. Ensure the raft is secure and stable before allowing anyone to enter the water. Tailor length of raft trip to the condition of the raft. Have throw lines available for use or instructors in the water. Students should avoid wearing heavy clothing and must wear appropriate footwear Instructor knowledge of weak/non-swimmers. Control of groups' actions whilst on the raft.
INJURY CAUSED BY CARELESS HANDLING OF RAFT	STAFF & STUDENTS	Inspection of equipment and construction of raft by Instructor to ensure no gaps/loose planks for limbs to become trapped. Suitable footwear to be worn at all times

INJURY CAUSED BY CARELESS HANDLING OF RAFT cont.	STAFF & STUDENTS	(on & off the water). Correctly fitted helmets to be worn whilst on the rafts. Instructor to be vigilant throughout the session. and discourage 'messaging around' on the raft, pontoon or slip during launch and recovery. Instructors to brief on and adopt correct manual handling procedures.
ENTRAPMENTS	STAFF & STUDENTS	Brief group to keep limbs away from tied and tensioned ropes. Tie away loose ends. Loose hair to be tied back. Instructors to ensure that they are sufficiently close to perform a rescue if needed.
FLIPPING RAFT	STAFF & STUDENTS	Ensure the weight of the group is evenly distributed over the raft.
OTHER ACTIVITIES	STAFF & STUDENTS	Keep the raft away from other activities taking place, such as model boats on the pond
RAFT BREAKING OR FALLING APART	STAFF & STUDENTS	Ensure the raft is built with the aims and objectives of the session in mind. Ensure appropriate safety measures are in place at all times.
STRUCK BY PADDLE	STAFF & STUDENTS	Instruct the group on the correct method of holding and using the paddle. Students to wear helmets while on the raft. Good supervision throughout.
FALLS AND SLIPS	Instructors & Group	Brief group on techniques for getting on and off the raft and safe manual handling of the raft on uneven and slippery ground including the slip and pontoon Make the group aware of any tripping hazards.
SPLINTERS	STAFF & STUDENTS	Raft building poles may be the exception of smooth objects and students are at a higher risk of splinters. Students should be briefed on risks and first aid. Before being used raft poles should be inspected.

Maintenance

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
Injuries from use of Tools	Staff & Volunteers	All staff must be briefed on the use of tools, as per the Maintenance Induction. Correct tools for the jobs should be used. Use of tools should be cleared by Senior Instructor, Chief Instructor or Principal.
Power Tools	Staff & Volunteers	Power tools are secured in a cupboard in the Store. They should only be used with permission from Senior Instructor, Chief Instructor or Principal.
Manual Handling	Staff & Volunteers	Correct lifting and handling techniques to be used at all times (covered in Maintenance Induction).
Injuries resulting Hazardous Materials	Staff & Volunteers	PPE must be used at all times.
Chemical Hazards	Staff & Volunteers	Permission from Senior Instructor, Chief Instructor or Principal must be gained before using any chemicals. Guidance from Safety Data Sheet and Instructors must be followed.
Electrical Hazards	Staff & Volunteers	Disconnect all tools not in use and inspection condition before use. Careful operation when working outdoors, especially near water.
Lone Working	Staff & Volunteers	Access to the Store is controlled by Senior Instructor, Chief Instructor and Principal.

Swim Safe with Onboard and Swimming from a beach

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS	STAFF & STUDENTS	The area around the teaching/swimming area will be assessed for trip hazards. The area chosen should be clear, if not possible, no running rule shall be enforced. Slippery areas, usually weedy, will try to be avoided and students briefed on avoiding or careful movement. Students should not be climbing on things that they can fall off of, even if it is falling into the water. Jumping is only permitted off an empty Havelett slipway after proper briefing.
OTHER BEACH USES	STAFF & STUDENTS	Ensure a safe and appropriately sized swimming area is maintained. Students to be briefed on keeping clear of other beach users.
GETTING INTO TROUBLE OUT OF DEPTH	STAFF & STUDENTS	Instructors must keep watch of students at all times and have throw lines available and ready to use. Instructors will enforce strict boundaries that match their confidence given the variable conditions. Anyone in the water is required to have buoyancy aids on. Students to be briefed on sound signals and instructors must have a whistle.

Own Boat Tuition

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
EQUIPMENT FAULTY OR NOT SUITABLE FOR USE	STAFF & STUDENTS	The instructor shall assess the own boat to see if it is suitable for use. Instructor shall take Guernsey Sailing Trust Safety Pack, Radio and, Life Jackets.
HANDLING AN UNFAMILIAR BOAT	STAFF & STUDENTS	The Instructor shall be an Advanced Powerboat Instructor or shall be deemed competent in the type of craft by Principal or Chief Instructor. Any session starting outside of the Albert Marina or Trust pontoon can only be run by Advanced Powerboat Instructor.
MOB	STAFF & STUDENTS	Prior to making way on the boat the Man Overboard Procedure shall be discussed and the recovery point onboard the boat shall be identified.

Operating Outside of the Normal Operating Areas

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
INCREASED RISK OF HITTING ROCKS OR BEING CAUGHT IN TIDAL CURRENT	STAFF & STUDENTS	The unfamiliar areas pose more risks. Only skippers qualified to take the coded boat shall be allowed to go beyond the Normal Operating Areas. These skippers will have the equivalent of Coastal Skipper and should use their knowledge to identify rocks and hazards.
OUTSIDE OF RADIO COVERAGE	STAFF & STUDENTS	Ensure the boat has fixed DSC radio and shall ensure EPIRB is onboard the boat. Any trip shall be logged with the coast guard and also logged with a designated shore contact.

Sea Survival Course Risk Assessment

For Sea Survival Classroom Sessions:

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
Use of Classroom facilities – Design defects and sanitary conditions	Instructor & Students	Classrooms used are purpose-built facilities in a good state of repair and maintained in hygienic conditions. The classrooms have access to conveniences and are maintained in a sanitary condition. The classrooms are subject to regular inspection and maintenance.
Use of Classroom facilities – Slips, slips trips and falls	Instructor & Students	Classrooms used are purpose-built facilities in a good state of repair. Classroom and surrounding area to be kept clear of trip and slip hazards. Good cable and equipment management to be applied to reduce slip / trip hazard.
Injury as a result of live flare deployment	Instructor & Students	No live flares to be brought into the classroom. Only dummy (inert) flares to be used for explanations / demonstrations.

False alarm and diverting of emergency response due to false activation of 'life saving equipment'

Members of Public

Only dummy (inert) Life Saving Devices to be used for explanation and demonstration.

For Sea Survival Pool Sessions:

HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	CONTROL MEASURES
Drowning due to inability to swim	Students	Students to complete a pre-course declaration and to assess their ability to take part. Only students who declare that they are physically able to take part in the pool session and can swim sufficiently, with lifejacket aids if needed, will be permitted to take part in the course. Second safety assistant to be present for pool-based activities.
Drowning due inadequate safety measures	Instructors & Students	The pool facility is a purpose-built swimming pool facility maintained in accordance with education establishment standards. Poolside rescue equipment is provided including, throw bags, life saving torpedoes and a rescue pole. Medical equipment is provided on site.
Drowning due to entrapment under life raft	Instructor & Students	Instructor to be a qualified RYA sea survival instructor. Instructor to facilitate pool session in accordance with their training. Second safety assistant to be present for pool-based activities Student to have life jackets which provide buoyancy. Activity to be conducted within the confines of a swimming pool and with an instructor and additional safety person present. Technique will be demonstrated and students briefed on activity. During initial practice the life raft will be positioned so as to be able to be lifted clear of the student should it need to be.
Physical / emotional injury through lack of safeguarding considerations	Students	Centre safeguarding procedures and policies to be followed.

Exasperating existing of medical condition or injury through participation in course	Instructor & Students	Instructor to maintain fitness to deliver the course. Students to complete medical declaration prior to taking part in the course. Only students who declare themselves fit to take part are accepted onto the course.
Injury severity made worse by lack of access to medical facilities / aid	Instructor & Students	First aid equipment to be available at the venue. Instructor to be in possession of means of communication to summon medical assistance.
Musco-skeletal injury from jumping into water	Instructor & Students	Instructor to demonstrate technique and brief students on the activity. Only a pool with sufficient depth for height of jump to be utilised. There will be no diving.
Musco-skeletal or crush injury from crushing while boarding life raft	Students	Instructor to brief students on the activity. Instructor and safety person to monitor the group and ensure boarding is carried out safely. Sufficient life raft capacity for the number of students to be observed in accordance with the SoPs – no more than double the number of students than the life raft capacity. Students take turns so that the life raft capacity is not exceeded.
Musco-skeletal or crush injury from manual handling of equipment	Instructor & Students	Safety Brief – only carry items that are within your capabilities. Any lifting of the life raft container will be a minimum of a two-person lift.
Musco-skeletal injury as a result of a slip, trip or fall	Instructor & Students	Safety Brief – pool rules to be followed: ● Do not enter the Pool area until directed to do so by a teacher ● No running ● No ducking or dive-bombing ● No open cuts or sores ● No diving without permission ● No diving into water of insufficient depth ● Do not enter until the pool cover is fully removed ● Use the toilet before entering the pool area ● Obey the whistle

		• Watches and jewellery must not be worn in the pool Instructors and safety officers to monitor for pool rule compliance. Pool area to be kept clear of trip hazards.
Musco-skeletal injury as a result of slip, trip, fall or contact with another person	Instructor & Students	Safety Brief – Instructor and safety person to monitor group dynamic. Pool rules to be followed at all times – Instructor and safety person to monitor compliance. Safety Brief - During simulation exercise students can act as a distraction but are not to make physical contact with other participants or to throw objects. Instructor and safety officer to monitor for compliance.
Injury due to exhaustion	Students	Instructor to run session with fatigue and exhaustion in mind. To ensure students aren't over worked. Instructor and safety person to monitor for fatigue throughout.