



## **BKSA Schools Manual**

### **Kitesurf**

Updated January 2010

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**Appendix 1, BKSA Scheme and Instructor Qualifications & Career Progression**

**Appendix 2, Child Protection and SMS Templates**

**Appendix 3, UK Based Schools operating overseas**

**Appendix 4, Minimum requirements for BKSA schools to run ITC courses.**

**THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS GUIDELINES AND THE INSPECTORATE PROCESS FOR KITE SURFING SCHOOLS WITHIN THE UK, IRELAND AND UK BASED TRAINING COMPANIES RUNNING SCHOOLS ABROAD. (see appendix 5)**

## **Introduction**

BKSA Schools process for 2011 is aimed at bringing teaching establishments and the recognition process in-line with current good practices within the watersports/extreme sports industry. Its goal is not to hinder or make difficult the process of becoming recognized but to ensure that appropriate steps have been taken to ensure the safety of 3rd parties, students and instructors. Schools are also the back bone to the education network, so examples of current "Good Practice" and in many cases "Best Practice" should be evident to an external assessor and students.

This document also provides a resource for obtaining and updating "good or best practices".

Schools or persons wishing to obtain recognition from the BKSA should expect that an inspection process is the only effective way of monitoring levels of quality and enhancing safety and professional practice amongst the sport. The external review should be of constructive benefit to the business.

**A school by definition is:**

*A place where people, can study a particular subject either some of the time or all of the time:*

That said, the operation that must obtain recognition is the provider.

Within the UK and overseas the BKSA only acknowledge the operation of commercially insured schools operating within the guidelines of this manual. And do not recognise individuals to operate outside this remit. All schools without exception will be subject to an inspection of facilities, staffing, location and equipment used to provide kitesurfing activity sessions.

The BKSA appreciate the diversity different schools and their infrastructures, but demand the basic safety protocol and guidelines be adhered by all, at all times.

**THE INSPECTOR IS LOOKING AT THE OVERALL STRUCTURE OF SAFETY MANAGEMENT AND THE "CULTURE OF SAFETY" WITHIN A SCHOOL.**

Centre manager/school owner: "I know my centre is safe".

Inspector: "Prove it".

A range of important information can be gained by cross referencing these guidelines on the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority website [www.aals.org](http://www.aals.org) or request a set of adventure activities guidance regulations and advice from the licensing service. Also consider looking at other governing bodies web sites which often hold relevant information about "current good practice" for example [www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk).

2010 has seen the BKSA schools network grow to encompass over 30 schools nationwide. And a growing number overseas. The wealth of information from these schools is providing a solid base for teaching practice in all environments, from inland harbours to rugged coastal beaches and beyond. School owners and

instructors now have access to a selection of teaching informations to widen knowledge and teaching practices.

## 1. School Application Process

The process a school needs to go through to gain recognition status from the BKSA at the time of writing, is outlined below and throughout this document. It is complimented by a 'Schools Guidance sheet.' Which can be followed by new BKSA School applicants.

### 1.1

1. Contact BKSA Training and request an application form, and schools pack. This contains a step by step guidance sheet. ([training@kitesurfing.org](mailto:training@kitesurfing.org) )

2. Complete the application form and send it into the training dept (address found in appendix) along with the first years recognition fee. Payment details found in Appendix 5.

***Please note payment of BKSA school recognition fee in no way guarantee's recognition to the BKSA schools network. Recognition is only granted post the satisfaction of all requirements outlined in the inspectors report.***

3. BKSA training will then authorise an inspector to contact the school and arrange a convenient inspection date. This must be agreed by both parties

Inspections are broken into several areas:

- Site and location
- Management infrastructure and staffing
- Activity and equipment

Annually a school is subject to an inspection, and maybe subject to a spot check inspection if concerns are raised. On the day of inspection a number of papers and preparations must have taken place in order for the inspector to complete the process.

## 1.2 Requirements on day of inspection

- Produce for the inspector on the day of inspection photocopies of all staff qualification certificates including expiry dates. (These are to be kept by the inspector)
- Produce photocopies of all Risk Assessments, Operating procedures and Emergency procedures.(These are to be kept by the inspector)
- Produce evidence of valid insurance and permissions from land owners and councils for use of teaching areas.
- Complete and show evidence of any mandatory requirements highlighted in the inspectors report letter, from a previous inspection.

An information page is available on the BKSA website for each recognised school. This can contain prices, details of courses and a picture.

## 1.3 Appeal

Schools may appeal the decision made by the inspector. All appeals must be made in writing to the Head of training reasoning the grounds for appeal. This will be submitted to, and heard by the BKSA training department.

## 1.4 Using this manual

Items highlighted in **Bold** are a mandatory requirement and evidence of these items will be required for BKSA School recognition. For items in **Bold** please go to the minimum requirement section, (appendix 1) where all items are listed. Due to the nature of the sport and its changing nature the discretion of the inspector will be respected.

## 2. Staffing

Good quality staffing is one of the keys to running a successful and safe kitesurfing school. Serious focus on capability of the staff and Chief Instructor/Principle will be made to ensure qualifications and training are current. With such a fast moving sport as kitesurfing, instructors should have evidence that they are up to date with Current "Good Practice, equipment and teaching trends". Evidence must include: BKSA revalidation course attendance, Instructor conference's, RYA courses, First Aid updates, Senior Instructor courses, Internal training.

### 2.1 Owner/Management/Duty Holder

All schools need a person to which its actions are held responsible for, although instructors or key staff may be held proportionally responsible for any negligence.

The employer is fundamentally accountable. This person is known as the "Duty Holder" more information about his can be gained from the H&S authority. [Local H&S office.](#)

"Person" or "empoyer" may imply more than one, e.g. a body of people like a group of trustees, board of directors or partners. "The Duty Holders"

e.g. A shop owner might wish to employ an instructor to teach students how to Kite surf. The shop owner would be the duty holder and would need to ensure that appropriate good practices are being followed, according to the BKSA 'School approval scheme. **An instructor opertating independently for financial gain, via referrals through a shop, or any form of commercial entity or advertising will not be recognised, insured or endorsed by the BKSA in any way.**

The instructor certification is only one part of the "duty holders", responsibility to the safety of the students. Where necessary the "duty holder", must educate themselves in a range of procedureds to help them evaluate the safe practices of the staff.

## 2.2 Person in Charge

All BKSA recognised schools must have a senior Instructor in charge of day to day operations. (This is often the duty holder, within small operations)

The senior instructor is responsible for all kitesurfing related practical operations.

Within larger operations, in exceptional circumstances a BKSA recognised school may endorse an equivalent senior level instructor to oversee a level 1 instructor. This is done in consultation with BKSA Training directly.

The employer is also responsible for the person elected to be monitored and follow the guidelines laid out in this document and other relevant informations. If a key member of staff, eg. Senior Kitesurf Instructor or principle is changed, or the school is sold/ duty holder responsibility is transferred. The BKSA must be informed as soon as is practicable.

**It is important that whoever is in charge of daily activities has an appropriate background to undertake the responsibilities of running a kitesurfing school.**

For example:

- SI Sailing instructor or RYA SI Equivalent qualification level.
- Land based Equivalency by application. Outdoor education, Paragliding/airsports etc.
- Background in watersports schools and establishments in a range of different locations is preferable
- All cases must be made clearly to the inspector and will be considered by the BKSA Training Dept.

In the event of the inspector feeling that the person in charge of daily activities has neither the skill nor experience to be running activities they have the right to refuse the recommendation. An appeal can be made to the Head of Training.

In certain circumstances is it also the role of the inspector to "protect people from unnecessary risk". If the inspector is unsure then the head of training will be

contacted who may in turn contact the relevant local authority, who may carry out an independent assessment of the risk that students and staff are being exposed to.

### 2.3 Instructors

If a school wishes to employ an instructor it is important that a system is in place to ensure the employer understands the level competency the instructor has. Evidence of this process should be available for the inspector to see. All certification must be kept on file for all employees of the school, both regular and freelance. Likewise a signed induction sheet must be signed by all working instructors. This must indicate and prove an adequate induction process has been undertaken of all locations, operations and procedures.

When children are being taught within the school a security check must be undertaken. A child protection policy must be held by the school, this must be read and signed by all staff. A template copy is available from the BKSA training dept.

More information about working with children is available on request. Also information on AALA licences.

Where staff are employed their employer should hold a current C.V . **Evidence of contacting referees of an employee should also be available to the inspector.** A phone call is the best way to obtain information about a potential employer. However, the more common approach of a written statement should be made.

### 2.4 Qualifications

**Qualifications should be double- checked in case the qualification status has been withdrawn.** On inspection if there is any suspicion that an instructor has been removed the inspector must contact BKSA Training and confirm the status of the person in question and reflect this in their report of the inspection.

Employers are also entitled to contact the BKSA training dept who hold the list of instructor names and Qualification levels to crosscheck instructor qualifications.

Please note the BKSA requires all instructors to revalidate qualifications at all levels every 3 years. Instructors operating under any expired qualifications will not be recognised, insured or endorsed by the BKSA in any way.

## **2.5 Working with minors**

**Where persons 17 and under are being taught "on- water" activities a current AALA (Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority )certificate must be available for viewing.**

**Schools must be aware that to teach a student under the age of 18 without a licence is a criminal offence. The only acceptable exception to this law is where the parent (not a friend of the parent or similar) must be in a position to stop the activity at any time. This would mean that an instructor taking a group into a shallow water area whilst the parent stayed in the clubhouse would NOT be acceptable. Fundamentally the Parent needs to be playing an active part and shoulder- to-shoulder with their son/daughter.**

**If the inspector finds evidence that youngsters are being taught on the water without the parents ability to stop the activity at any time\* then the inspector will contact the licensing authority.**

**Obtaining an Activities Licence is not difficult and the inspection team and the authority will happily give advice and guidelines for preparing for an inspection from one of the inspection team.**

The BKSA would advise anybody who is running a kitesurfing school to go to the AALA website for further guidelines. [www.aala.org.uk](http://www.aala.org.uk)

Remember the licensing laws only come into play when entering the water so landbased kiting is not included within the act. That said, good practices should be adhered to for all contact with youth in adventurous sports.

## 2.6 Monitoring

The monitoring of staff plays a major role within the safety of the students. A staff meeting in the morning is a good way of finding out how your staff are. Tired, fed- up, drunk/intoxicated are just some of the flag signs that senior staff and duty holders should keep an eye out for.

On-water inspections should be made by a senior member of the school staff and or an external assessor to ensure that safe practices are being carried out. It also ensures that operating procedures are being carried out.

## 2.7 Frequency

Monitoring staff can de-motivate if carried out incorrectly. Inspections should come across in a positive way to help improve the quality of the product.

Frequency of inspections will come down to how competent a duty holder feels the staff are. **However, a weekly check or monitoring of staff should be a minimum for most schools.** Although daily is strongly recommended.

## 2.8 Disciplinary procedure

**An inspector will need to see that a procedure of warning/disciplining staff who work outside the parameters of the procedures is in place.**

For instance an instructor who is asked to wear a buoyancy aid and a knife whilst teaching , and is found not to be doing so during an inspection, puts the employer in a negligent situation.

A common procedure for this would be two verbal warnings then a written warning then asked to leave. In this situation it would be good practice to inform the BKSA Training department for their records.

Employers can also put in place a personal log of staff issues. A note on the file can be added for good and bad situations.

**Evidence of disciplinary protocol should be available to an inspector.**

## 2.9 Over working

Research in the last few years have lead to an unprecedented range of information about "The Human Factor". It is an area, which schools and instructors alike should take very seriously when running on- water programs.

**A school will have to show evidence, at any given time that a period of twelve consecutive working days is not undertaken by any of the operational staff. This evidence shall be found through daily logs and staff time-tables.**

It would also be relevant to establish reasonable daily hours to prevent The Human Factor playing a major part in any on- water accident/incident.

## 2.10 Qualifications

Qualifications must be available in photocopy format for the inspector to take away and keep on file. All relevant documents should be filed.

The best way to do this is to have a file with the staff members name and copies of his qualifications are kept together.

In larger establishments (4 staff+) a "matrix" of qualification dates and levels should be compiled to enable management keep up to date records.

## 2.11 Membership

**Qualifications will not be valid unless the certificate holder is a current member of the BKSA.**

## 2.12 Validation

A BKSA instructor certificate becomes invalid after three years of the date on the certificate. **A refresher course will need to be attended to revalidate at one of the national training schools or by attending an instructor conference.**

**There have been two instructor conferences run annually from 2006 onwards. At least one conference must be attended within 3 years of a**

**qualification date or previous conference attendance to maintain a valid instructor qualification. Failure to attend will result in the revoking of an instructor qualification until a refresher course is attended.**

**A current First Aid certificate and powerboat level 2 licence, must be held for the instructor certificate to be valid.**

### **2.13 Staff Induction**

Evidence of an induction period and what it entails must be clearly available for the inspector.

A reasonable period of time should be given to new employees to get to grips with the style of instruction given in the specific school, the locations used and the type of equipment they will be using when teaching.

Time to read operating procedures and risk assessments should be made.

Shadow working where possible should be undertaken and evidence of this should be available

Here is the list of the following areas that staff induction should include -

**Understanding of their responsibilities**

**Understanding of locations and the limitations**

**Equipment available**

**Awareness of Procedures, times and activity session duration**

**Awareness of Emergency Action Plans (E.A.P) - Scenario Based Training**

**Shadow and Assessment period**

### **2.14 Understanding of areas and limitations**

**All new staff should be made familiar with teaching areas before taking live students to the location.**

The employer should be confident that the instructor understands the key dangers on any/all given sites. Shadow time at certain locations until happy with the instructor capabilities must be undertaken.

### **2.15 Equipment used**

The instructor should be given time before running the first lessons to become familiar with the style of equipment he/she will be using. Employers and instructors should respect that equipment differences are vast and that even

those with extensive knowledge of kites come across equipment that may fly differently on regular occasions.

Where possible the instructors should be given time to ride/sail & use the equipment they will be using to teach students with.

### **2.16 First Aid**

Instructors and assistants should all know where the nearest first aid equipment is at all times when on activities. They should know what is in each first aid kit and how to use the equipment.

Evidence of maintenance of first aid provision must be recorded for monitoring purposes.

### **2.17 Power Boat Training**

If staff are expected to use a power driven craft for any purpose they must have had an induction to the craft and its operational limitations.

The RYA Level 2 Power Boat certificate is a minimalist certification and is not a experienced boat handling certificate. Employers should conduct their own assessment of the persons capabilities to operate any given craft within an area. Furthermore, training of kite rescue and recovery should be practiced regularly from all craft used for tuition.

### **2.18 Awareness of Procedures.**

All employees must be given time to read and understand the schools Operating Procedures. Evidence in the form of a signed induction form from all instructors/staff, part- time & full time staff must be made available to the inspector during the inspection process.

### **2.19 Awareness of EAP**

#### **Emergency Action Plans**

All staff must be made aware of what to do at any given site if something goes wrong.

Procedures and responsibilities should be made clear during the induction process. This is best done by way of a step by step flow diagram of what to do in the event of an emergency.

The ability for the instructor to take control of a situation that is spiraling out of control is of vital importance, and 'damage limitation' can be greatly affected by the clear process of what the key actions are.

### **2.20 Scenario Based Training**

Employers are strongly advised to set up some Scenario based training during an induction process to help determine instructor's capabilities and actions in difficult situations.

### **2.2 Shadow and assessment period**

As mentioned although the qualification implies that an employee has had training to help them teach the sport. It is also the employers role to ensure the safety of the instructor and the students at all times. The responsibility of the "Duty Holder" i.e. Owner, trustees, Principle, means that if an incident were to happen it is likely that if the training and or induction and monitoring of staff was weak or insufficient they would clearly be held responsible.

**The Duty holder has overall responsibility in law to ensure the safety of the client.**

*N.B. All instructors, centre managers, principles, and all persons delivering any elements of syllabus in a BKSA Recognised School must be a member of the BKSA.*

*For a breakdown of Instructor levels and career progression see The BKSA Scheme in appendix 1.*

### 3. Facilities, Teaching Locations

The BKSA is aware that one schools interpretation of facilities can be very different from anothers. It is not the role of the BKSA to judge the way these facilities are advertised or marketed, but simply their suitability for purpose.

The BKSA recommend that schools make the learning of the sport as reasonably comfortable as possible. Due to the nature of the sport there will always be an element of getting changed in car parks, especially if the wind is in a strange direction. However this should not be the norm & changing facilities and showers should be available for students whenever practicable.

A BKSA school will have a reasonable "BASE" which should double up as a class room, staff meeting area & teaching facility. This room or base should also serve as a teaching area in unfavourable weather and an area to debrief students at the end of a kitesurfing session. This base is to be no more than 3 miles from the primary site of activity sessions.

The use of a shops retail environment, or the use of a residential place of dwelling is not recommended as a suitable classroom/base from which a school is to be run.

#### 3.1 Teaching Areas

The quality of the teaching area is of vital importance to the school's success and is another key factor in the amount of safety management that is needed. Locations which are considered LOW RISK in prevailing conditions or certain tidal states can very quickly become HIGH RISK in changeable weather. This factor must be vigilantly considered when assessing suitability for purpose.

A range of locations can be used for the purpose of teaching kitesurfing and it is required to undertake [risk assessments](#) for activities and locations to ensure that safety measures are within current good practice before teaching at any location.

Clear open spaces with knee to waist deep water are the most beneficial for improving people's skill set.

### **3.2 Remoteness.**

It is also important to assess the level of remoteness to evacuation points, hospitals, and road access point. This plays a determining factor on the equipment and training instructors should have. In the UK exposure to the elements and hypothermia are ever present (even in the height of summer) and appropriate protocols should be laid out in the [operating procedures](#) for these factors. Overseas operations should equally consider exposure to sun and extreme heat.

Drawing a map of the areas for visual reference for instructors and students is of great benefit. It can show the Access points and emergency evacuation points. The use of these can be used in briefings.

### **3.3 Suitability**

School owners must understand the difference between a good kitesurfing venue and a good area to learn basic kitesurfing skills. As these can differ significantly.

Students & 3rd Parties should not be put at unnecessary risk due to the nature of the location. The school should be prepared and trained to deal with the eventualities of the style of location they are using. i.e. in a surf location, staff must receive training on surf rescue procedures.

### **3.4 Shallow water locations**

Probably the best type of teaching location is shallow knee to waist deep water, especially when the surface is flat. The area should be clear of underwater hazards and where hazards cannot be moved buoys should mark any dangers and students should be warned of the risk it may cause.

### 3.5 Deep-water locations

Deep-water locations in cross-shore winds offer good training to students. However in the early stages of kitesurfing it can be frustrating for the student. Time on-land and competent boat work can lead to very self-capable students.

In foreign countries some instructors that teach on a one to one basis find that hanging onto the student during body dragging exercises can be useful. This can be a useful technique as long as you consider the problems encountered with regaining access to a rescue craft in case of emergency. It can leave you in difficulty in the Worst Case Scenario position if you haven't pre-planned your [EAP](#).

All deep water locations must have motorised rescue provision on hand at all times.

### 3.6 Open water / Surf beaches

Open water surf beaches can offer good opportunity for people to progress. Many riders have learnt in surf conditions.

It is important to note the style of beach and therefore the style of surf is taken into account, both for students and instructors. Even a small dumping wave (1ft) can cause serious injury to a student wrapped in lines.

A long flat beach where the energy of the waves is reduced before getting to the student allows the student to develop their skills in a relatively safe environment.

Surf beaches can tend to attract crowds of people and on summer days teaching may have to be canceled and or not booked to avoid endangering [3rd parties](#).

Information on beach zoning projects can be requested and advice be given via the BKSA Training dept.

### 3.7 Boat Based schools

Some schools have found ways to teach from a floating platform (boats) this allows the instructor to enter an area free from third party risks. It gives the student room to manoeuvre and a chance to enjoy relatively big kites from an early stage.

There are however disadvantages that need to be taken into account when inspecting, setting up or running a school of this nature. The main disadvantage is the lack of practice on a shoreline. The majority of accidents occur on-land and often in the interface between land and water. If this skill section is taught and practiced it is reasonable to say that learning some sections (such as the water start) off a boat or platform gives the student a safe environment to learn. The provider should be aware that this method might not be suitable for all.

**Any schools operating from boats will also train students at a location with a land interface before signing them off at any level.**

The experience of the driver/drivers is a key safety factor and evidence of further training such as RYA safety Boat L3 course alongside in-house training is a necessity.

### **3.8 Land Owners**

It is in the interest of schools that they obtain permission to use the land they wish to use whilst teaching kitesurfing.

The main reason for obtaining permission from the landowner is that most insurance companies stipulate that you have this permission. This will be checked in an inspection so evidence will be needed if your insurers require you to do so.

### **3.9 Key area of risk**

Inspectors will check that all “key areas of risk”, are listed within the risk assessments and more importantly staff and students are aware of what these are on any given site.

The Inspector may wish to informally interview staff/students at some stage within an inspection to establish whether there is any disparity between management, written documents and reality.

### 3.10 Reasonable levels of risk

Kitesurfing as an activity has an inherent risk attached. This should be made clear to students and parents of students undertaking lessons. See also [waiver forms](#) in appendix 3.

**The provider has a clear legal responsibility to maintain an effective risk analysis and management system. Failure to do so may result in prosecution under the Health and Safety at Work Act.**

The 'Idiots Guide' approach to things is a good simple methodology. In these terms there are only three things that will cause death or disabling injury during an activity session.

- **Drowning**
- **Impact** - with something solid (either from above, the side, by falling onto it or getting dragged onto it)
- **Exposure.**

What the inspector wants to know is how do you prevent these from happening during your sessions?

### 3.11 Classroom and Facilities

A classroom should be available for instructors and students, although at certain times of the year it may not get used that often. During cold spells and wet periods instructors should have the ability to sit somewhere dry and talk to their students undisturbed, whilst delivering the mandatory theory elements of courses.

Although a cafe or pub might be an option realistically this becomes unpractical and uncomfortable for students and instructors on a regular basis. And is therefore unsatisfactory for this purpose.

Porta-cabins or converted motor homes may be an answer to this problem in expensive waterfront areas when permission can be obtained.

Converted vans can suffice for beach side if backed up with a better facility near by.

An office or shop front where paper work can be filled out is fundamental, but not recommended as a classroom substitute.

### **3.12 Other Facilities**

It is reasonable to say that the better the general facilities like warm drinks and snacks help the student relax and enjoy the training they are receiving. Although not a compulsory issue it all adds up to the care of the students.

(Please refer to appendix 3 for overseas school requirements.)

## 4 Equipment, Hardware

### 4.1 General

Equipment should be suitable for the level of the student's ability

All kites must be flown with a fully functioning safety system as laid out in the BKSA Instructor manual and on the instructor-training course. These include:

- *The ability to let go of the control bar and the kite de-power completely*
- *That anything you attach yourself to with the harness or any other area of the body has an operational "quick release system" attached.*
- *That if needed the student can release the kite altogether, freeing themselves from the kite if they were being dragged by the leash.*
- *That all systems that are activated to a depowered state then prevent the kite flying away altogether via an adequate leash.*

All safety systems will be checked on all bars during an inspection.

### 4.2 2,4,5 line. Bow, Hybrid, C shape

Fundamentally it doesn't matter. Provided all kites have a fully functioning 100% depower safety system which is in good working order and the equipment is of relevant size and age.

The size of the kite is fundamental to the safety of the Pilot and those around. A student should never fly a kite on-land that can in any way physically lift them. The exercise of scudding is no longer seen as a sensible way to educate students in the power of kites as body dragging in a water environment achieves the same skills and has far less risk of injury.

The only time this may be seen as reasonable is when the [surface](#) is soft sand with no foreign objects such as: shells, stones, clumps of seaweed that may contain further unseen dangers. Footwear must be considered, along with increased boundaries and strict supervision of the exercise.

BIG BOARDS - SMALL KITES this is the platform for safe learning, students and instructors can make mistakes without lots of power / loss of control, also this is far better for flying technique.

#### **4.3 Correct quantity for number of students**

A school shall be able to operate in a range of conditions. It shall be able to give a minimum of one kite per two students. This must exist across the whole spectrum of weather operations. It must also account for contingencies/ the worst case scenario. Broken kites must be seen to be dealt with efficiently, and maintenance recorded.

#### **4.4 Board Leashes**

In all Kitesurf learning environments board leashes are no longer relevant or required. They pose a risk of the board impacting the rider, which if removed negates this risk.

It is furthermore a key skill for a beginner student to execute an effective crosswind bodydrag which will return them to their board.

In exceptional intermediate and advanced scenarios a board leash maybe justified. E.g. When learning to waveride with a directional on a reef. This must be briefed and justified by the instructor prior to any such lesson.

#### **4.5 Reasonable condition**

Equipment will be in reasonable condition. Old or poor maintained equipment will impede the progression of the student and is not satisfactory. The inspectors discretion will be reasoned and considered. A wide range of modern depowerable kites and a selection of composite twin tip boards is required for all school environments.

Boards should have handles, shall have no sharp dings or loose fibreglass. Sharp nosed boards shall not be used and fins shall be blunt.

## 5 Equipment, Safety and Personal

### 5.1 Personal, Helmets

The chance of a student being pulled into an object or having a line cut an ear badly has to be recognized. More likely is a slight bump from a board or water impact. This has led to the wearing of helmets to be mandatory.

- There should be enough helmets for all students to be wearing them even if they are not piloting the kite.
- Helmets will not have any external damage.
- Helmets must fit students effectively, in order that the student can see the kite whilst piloting.
- Helmets should not cover the ears as this prevents them understanding instructions from the instructor.

Open ear Peaked



Open ear non peaked



### 5.2 Buoyancy aid

Drowning is a serious threat to students. This is especially important if the student/instructor has been injured or caught up in kite lines.

- The school must provide enough buoyancy aids to fit a range of sizes and for all persons on the water.
- There must be no external damage to the buoyancy aid. Zips, straps, clips, outer body must all be in good condition.
- For venues that may find students and instructor in areas out of their depth a minimum of 50 Newton buoyancy aids will be worn.

Buoyancy aids like the one below that have multi- point adjustments will save your school money.

These may be subject to buoyancy testing during an inspection to check condition and performance. Kitesurfing specific buoyancy aids are recommended as they do not interfere with a students harness or ride up excessively.



1. Gul



2. Yak

### 5.3 Wetsuits

- Wetsuits must be worn by all students undertaking kitesurfing activities within UK waters.
- Instructors must use their experience to establish how thick and what style of wetsuit should be worn.
- All wetsuits should be in reasonable condition in the view of the general public and must be cleaned after each student. A range of styles for different seasons and sizes for varying people is necessary.



Winter Steamer



Shorti

#### 5.4 Boots

Keeping boots clean and dry can be an almost impossible task. It is reasonable for students taking body-dragging courses to wear trainers (open footed sandals do come off unless very good quality).

As students improve and board work is undertaken, trainers hinder the foot and prevent the student keeping the foot in the strap. It is reasonable for hygiene reasons to ask people to purchase their own footwear, especially if they wish to take up the sport.

**All students should wear soled footwear whilst learning kitesurfing.**

#### 5.5 Harness

Harnesses will be in reasonable condition and there should be no doubt that the harness has a chance of breaking whilst students undertake activities.

Generally seat harnesses are recommended, as they tend to fit a wider range of students. Buoyancy aids don't hinder the user from seeing the hook. Waist harnesses are now suitable and sometimes preferable for certain circumstances.

It is essential that harnesses are fitted correctly and sufficiently tight to avoid any bar movement/riding up.



Seat



Waist

## 5.6 Rescue Craft

Rescue boats can be a fundamental way of dealing with kitesurf students in trouble. They often also allow locations to be used when access to the water is unsafe or the wind is on shore.

**All BKSA schools must assess the need to have a rescue craft at their school and the most suitable type for their environment.**

This will be based upon:

- Depth of water
- Location
- Prevailing conditions
- Times of working.

That said, when on the water the majority of venues require a rescue boat to extract students.

**All schools must have the ability to get to the students within three minutes, at all times whilst students are on the water.**

\*In surf locations then Surf style rescue facilities may be appropriate.

\*In shallow water areas where an outboard engine would be inappropriate then a floating platform (open canoe could be used to float an injured or unconscious student to shore for a pre planned evacuation.



## 5.7 Rescue Craft

Craft should be appropriate for the task. Seaworthy. Ready to go without delay when students are on the water. And of the most suitable and safety enhancing type for the location in question.

The majority of kitesurfing school operations will have a regular small rigid inflatable in place for rescue purposes. This craft must carry provisions equivalent to that laid out in the RYA basic boat safety equipment guidelines. (available at [rya.org](http://rya.org))

## 5.8 Other styles of rescue craft

Floating platform/ Canoe. This can prove very practical both for rescues and as a central point in a large shallow bay for reference. Students must be kept within 3 minutes of this rescue craft at all times. The craft must have adequate means of

propulsion, i.e. paddles and be 'effective' whilst in motion with two persons on board. A semi sinker/ sub 140 ltr windsurf board is not suitable.

Instructors must prove a level of competence in controlling and paddling a canoe. **This form of rescue craft can only be used in shallow water in onshore or cross onshore winds.**

### 5.9 Surf rescue boards

At least one person within the school should hold a recognized training award for surf lifesaving.

Comprehensive in-house training and scenarios should be given to anyone who will be expected to use the craft. The craft also must be approved by the RNLI, RLSS as a specific rescue craft. A normal surfboard is not satisfactory.

If the rescue craft takes the shape of a surf rescue board. Then appropriate provision of safety equipment must also be carried in accordance with the RNLI, RLSS. Furthermore a certificate of competence must have been gained by at least one permanent instructor in the school. This can be facilitated through Lusty glaze lifeguards, contact [david.whelan@lustyglaze.co.uk](mailto:david.whelan@lustyglaze.co.uk)

**This form of rescue craft can only be used in shallow breaking surf conditions under 3ft in size in onshore or cross onshore winds.**

### 5.10 Kite Rescue:

In some situations rescue with the aid of a kite can save time, however, wind reliant makes it restricted in its use. The skill level of the rescuer must be of high standard. Evidence of extensive scenario based training would be very appropriate.

Whilst a kite on the beach can prove very useful as a method of retrieval, it must not take the place of a rescue craft unaffected by wind. It is common that

students will need retrieving when the wind drops. In this instance a kite retrieval is not possible and is therefore inadequate as a sole rescue craft.



### 5.11 Radio or Emergency communication

Communications are a key factor in creating a safe environment.

All instructors will carry on them a method of alerting emergency services. Mobile Phone/VHF marine/personal intercom to a nominated base. Whichever system used must withstand the environment and be available as an option to the instructor at all times whilst out on activities. (For instance a radio system linked in with a busy shop would not be appropriate). The use of telephones should be available as a back up plan.

### 5.12 Phone limitations

Phone signal strengths should also be checked at any given location and where appropriate a back up plan should be in place. If instructors are working alone then students should be briefed on how to raise the alarm in the event of an emergency.

### 5.13 Instructor Personal Equipment

All instructors trained through the BKSA instructor training scheme will have been told about the differences between personal sailing equipment and the equipment they need to run an outdoor activity session.

The use of equipment is a key to keeping people safe in the kitesurfing environment. All equipment must be appropriate for the task and well maintained.

### 5.14 Knife

**All instructors must carry a knife whilst on the water.**

Instructors may need to cut a student free from a range of potential items (lines being the main one), Fishing line/nets or buoys and other objects can all be potential hazards on the water.

Instructors could well have to cut clothing free in able to start emergency heart massage, so knife should be able to cut clothing such as webbing.

A serrated blunt ended knife is the tool to be carrying on the water. However any style of solid knife could be used.

### 5.15 Buoyancy Aid

**All instructors will wear a buoyancy aid whilst teaching on-water.**

Although instructors spend a major amount of time on the beach they are often required to get into the water to save life or teach certain aspects.

A buoyancy vest can seem cumbersome, however an instructor style buoyancy vest has pockets and other useful feature that allow the instructor to be in a position to react the best way in a given situation.

Given the amount of time an instructor spends on the water it is likely that at some time in his or her career that the extra floatation will help save life.

### 5.16 Helmet

As the role model all instructor should wear helmets whilst teaching on- water. Helmets that don't restrict hearing or movement must be used.

The instructor shall wear a helmet for all demonstrations to students. This may include personal sailing time.

### **5.17 Personal Clothing**

An instructor will be appropriately dressed for the conditions, (In cold/warm weather), to allow them to make the correct decisions and lead the group through the period of the session. In the UK this will probably mean a wetsuit or dry suit.

Appropriate foot wear should also be worn to allow instructor to walk across a range of surfaces in an emergency. Helmets are recommended for all instructors while running active teaching sessions.

### **5.18 Instructor bag**

An instructor bag shall be close to hand when teaching at a remote location.

The instructor bag will have in it:

The names of the students and any important medical information.

A pair of binoculars.

A communications device.

Spare clothing/equipment for cold or sun burnt students. For example sun cream, hot drink, spare woolly hat, etc

Spare line

Emergency procedures check list

A white board or similar teaching aid.

[First Aid Kit](#)

### **5.20 First Aid**

First Aid equipment shall be available at all times to the instructor during work times.

Schools should seriously think about the possibility of keeping a seriously injured student alive for 30 - 40 minutes. Schools should ensure that first aid kits are

kept dry and are checked regularly. The inspector might ask for a log of these checks.

Staff and students should be able to access this equipment within a reasonable period of time (approximate 2-3 minutes)

Any equipment used should be noted in the [accident book](#).

## 6.1 Teaching Structure

Any school needs a teaching structure allowing its students to monitor their personal progress. It is also an important part of instructor communications when handing over a student to another instructor. The BKSA Scheme is clearly segmented into logical stages to aid the structure and accreditation of students at all levels.

**All students will be certified at the end of the course with the appropriate certificate. (See appendix 1, or BKSA Scheme)**

## 6.2 BKSA scheme

The current BKSA scheme is broken into 2 levels. And Must be followed in planning and delivering all beginner and intermediate courses. This includes the issue of BKSA kiteboarder cards according to the stage reached within the syllabus. There is no level 3 to the scheme, it is separated into 5 intermediate areas of progression. For more details please refer to appendix 2, or BKSA scheme.

## 6.3 Programs for courses

It is strongly advised that centre managers and instructors take time to plan the structure of the course at the particular venue. Considerable focus is given to session planning during the ITC course for instructors. Please refer to the BKSA Level 1 Instructor manual for more information.

Schools must show an inspector that a course plan that includes a rounded safety information base (including self- rescue) is followed. Taster days and non- 'Scheme' style lessons must clearly be labeled and students clearly informed of the areas missed from the course.

What the BKSA want to prevent, is students buying inappropriate equipment with a lack of training and experience.

Students being signed off must have completed an assessment before obtaining any given level.

The assessment may be ongoing and continues throughout a course and doesn't need to be a formal assessment at beginner level unless asked for by the student.

#### 6.4 Key Safety Principles covered

**Pack downs, kite recovery and rescue techniques must all be practiced by the students at some stage on an entry- level course.**

The main concern of the inspector will be that ;

is the training provider producing students that are unaware of their own real personal level and unaware of what to do in an emergency situation? They may also wish to see scenario- based situations being carried out by students. i.e. what to do if a line breaks, how to get to your kite if the wind turns on-shore on a small beach area.

The inspector will take into account further training or club style training. For instance a school where students become members and sail within the rules and locations of the club may feel that areas of knowledge will be learnt through that process.

##### 6.25 Taster lessons -

Many schools offer taster classes for people to see if they like the sport and wish to continue their training further. **Students must be made aware that they are participating in a "Taster" course as opposed to a "how to Kitesurf" Course. Certification will reflect the short period of time they have had to obtain knowledge and experience.**

## 7 Safety Management Systems (SMS)

One of the key preventative safety measures is through having a structured approach to safety. This can be obtained through a SMS. The following areas should be put in place and revised on a regular basis by employees, senior staff, instructors, assistant and the "[duty holder](#)"

The "Culture of Safety" is developed through understanding the system outlined, where necessary training will be needed to help understand everyone's responsibilities to students and each other.

**Schools should be able to show evidence that the following has been put in place and that staff understand the importance of a structured and ongoing safety management system. The Following areas must be produced and display real evidence of use in a schools day to day operations:**

**Emergency Action Plans**

**Risk Assessment**

**Accident Reporting inc: accident book & Accident & Near Miss Review**

**Waiver and pre-course booking forms and procedure**

**Maintenance Logs**

**Standard Operating Procedures**

**What to do in the event of/ Hierarchy of command and responsibilities**

**Daily Logs**

**Medical Forms**

Additional help is available on SMS through contacting the BKSA Training dept or your [local H&S office](#).

## 7.1 Emergency Action Plans

- HAVE A PLAN - Think worst-case scenario
- An E.A.P plan must be written out and understood by all employees and some sections need to be aimed at students.

### Aims:

- Preventing the situation getting worse
- When, who and how to contact as a situation develops on/off the water.
- Communications. Including operation, numbers, channels etc.
- Evacuating a student.
- Who to contact.
- Dealing with the general public, media, other clients during an incident.
- Dealing with staff and your company/organization.
- Dealing with the aftermath and accident reporting (see RIDDOR.gov)

This is an over-view of the subject and school owners are recommended to refer to the HSE, RYA and AALA for information on compiling a suitable EAP.

More information is available from the BKSA Training department about this and all other documentation in this section.

Scenario based training should be carried out on a regular basis to ensure systems laid out in the plan hold up to practical situations. If these have not been tested then the inspector may insist on a scenario training exercise taking place before recommending the school for approval.

## 7.2 Risk Assessment

**Risk assessment will be carried out on all activities/locations and equipment offered by the school.**

Risk Assessments have been one of the great unknowns of recent SMS. It is important to say that a risk assessment is not the piece of paper it is written on (this is just the evidence that a reasonable process has taken place). A risk

assessment is simply looking at what could go wrong, deciding how best to avoid it, how those ideas are carried out and by whom. Whilst risk cannot be eliminated in kitesurfing it can be greatly reduced.

If you are running a commercial operation you are legally required to make and keep a risk assessment on your teaching site and operation. Some councils, insurers and landowners may also demand this, whether you are commercial or not. In any case it is good practice for your operation at whatever level, as it makes you more aware of the implications of teaching at your chosen location, plus provides support for you should there ever be an accident.

The key to risk assessments is to focus on the big things and not get caught up in the trivial. It is advised to all that have to carry out risk assessments to read Marcus Bailie's work on the AALA web site labeled. [Risk Assessments, Safety Statements and all that Guff](#)

**Kite surfing risk assessments must be carried out and overseen by a BKSA Senior Instructor.**

Further information and guidance is also to be found in the BKSA Instructor training manual.

#### THE MAIN POINT

Three things that will cause death or disabling injury during an activity session.

- Drowning
- Impact with something solid (either from above, the side or by falling onto it)
- Exposure.

The inspector needs to see that the above areas have been taken into account before and during activities.

ALL PERSONS INSTRUCTING OR TAKING PART IN ACTIVITIES SHOULD CARRY OUT A "**SITE ASSESSMENT**" BEFORE ACTIVITY STARTS.

### **7.3 Site Assessment**

Take into consideration when doing Risk Assessments. A site assessment differs from a risk assessment in the sense that it is for the now. It assesses a sites

suitability and characteristics at the time of use. For example, a dinghy regatta taking place in the usual teaching area would be a big factor for that session, but may not feature on a risk assessment of fixed hazards. This works very well as a group exercise before activity begins. It also gives perfect introduction into weather and tide affects

#### **7.4 Hazards**

Any solid object

Pilot must keep 3 line lengths away from any solid object.

#### **7.5 Third Party**

Third party means any living object here are a few examples:

Beach users

Dogs and their walkers

Horses

Powerboats

Swimmers

Other Kitesurfers

When possible a pilot should keep three line lengths away from 3rd Parties. Where that is not practical and not necessary. The student should understand how to interact with a specific 3rd party, i.e. a student should know the rules of the road before being asked to sail amongst other kitesurfers.

Where bystanders are in the teaching area and or could become in the teaching area the students must know how to keep the kite in a safe position and what to do if they lose control to avoid accident.

#### **7.7 Environmental**

Wind

Tides

Weather

These are the key factors to the success or failure of any wind powered sport. They must be monitored constantly and understood.

## 7.8 Surface

The surface makes a huge difference to the way a pilot interacts with the land, sea and the kite itself.

It is a key part of risk assessment.

Soft sand when it can be found without other beach users is by far the easiest to teach on. However, others include:

Clay

Rocks

Pebbles

Hard Sand

Concrete

Grass

The instructor should inform the student to be mindful of the surface he/she is on & alert to its specific dangers and characteristics.

## 7.9 Standard Operating Procedures

**Your school must hold a written set of operating procedures (S.O.P)**

Consider the operating procedures a bit like the rules for a football match. They include rule-based decisions to help you make the right decision in difficult situation.

Your S.O.P will need to be read by all the instructors during there [induction](#) period. **A signature from all instructors and staff should be available for the inspector to see**

They should include at least the following –

- Daily start up routine
- Who is responsible for what?

- What action to take if staff are missing?
- What activity is taking place?
- What equipment is required?
- Information to be left at base or with responsible person on full itinerary of the day.
- What are the safety protocols for the day?
- What safety equipment is required?
- Child protection policy (if required)
- Emergency action plan responsibilities recorded and understood by each member of staff

### 7.10 Daily Logs

**A daily record must be kept of students and instructors. This may be in a simple format as a School Diary. This should be supplemented with a daily sheet for all activity sessions run.**

The following information should be included

- Date
- Names of the students
- Name of instructor that lead any particular group
- Locations used
- Who is in charge of the daily activities?
- Basic equipment usage
- What time the group is expected to return (if going to a remote location)?

It is also wise to keep a log of the weather forecast and tide times for the day, and lesson progress.

### 7.11 Medical Forms

A medical/fitness form will be signed by all participant taking part to say they are medically fit to take part in the sport.

The Medical form is also there to highlight any important information for the instructor whilst involved in activities.

Direct questions are the best way to ensure information is correct. i.e. Do you have any history of heart disease yes/no? Etc.

Doctor's details should also be available in case of emergency.

Next of Kin details should also be gathered before activities take place.

### 7.12 Waiver and pre-course forms

Pre-course information allows you to plan and understand your client's needs. It is important that you gather this information and keep it in case of incident or accident.

Within this information a statement must be clearly made to clients alerting them to the risk inherent with kitesurfing and associated fitness requirements etc.

A generic template of a booking/waiver form is available from the BKSA training dept on request.

**It also seems important to**

**"Ask people about their level of ability before the activity"**

i.e. have you done any power kite sports before? What other adventures sports have you done before and to what level?

Tick boxes are a good way of speeding up the process. This can also be done by the instructor in the pre-activity briefings.

### 7.13 Maintenance Logs

Keeping logs of when important safety equipment was last checked and by whom is important piece of evidence gathering.

All powered craft must show adequate maintenance provision and servicing.

Kites, boards and bars and all associated safety equipment should be maintained and recorded to show 'good practice' and sufficient levels of care are being taken to prevent breakages and accidents.

N.B. An inspector will often follow the papertrail from an SOP, to a maintenance book, into the equipment room to check the process of who is responsible for maintenance is working adequately.

### 7.14 Accident Reporting

Schools will log all minor accidents in an accident- reporting book.

All schools shall show evidence that these incidents have been reviewed by a senior member of staff and actions to prevent re-occurrence have been carried out.

All schools will ensure that they understand what is required of them by UK law in the reporting of accidents to RIDDOR found on the RIDDOR web site. <http://www.riddor.gov.uk/>

Any serious accidents or incidents must be reported to the BKSA training dept via a 'Serious accident/incident report form', available on request.

### 7.15 Near Miss log

#### **All schools shall keep a log of "near-miss" events**

"Near -miss" occurrences should be logged and appropriate actions taken to ensure a re- occurrence with a worse outcome doesn't happen.

For Example: An advanced kitesurfer collides with a beginner at your local site. Both sailors were unharmed and carried on activities.

Date: 25th Dec 03

Instructor: William Shaky Spear

Student: John Foggit

Action taken: Local club informed of incident and are putting it in the next newsletter that an area close to the beach will be kept for beginners/ no jumping.

- Instructors reminded about the importance of clear briefings before sessions and to tell students of the risk from other kiteboarders

Although this does not totally prevent the incident from re-occurrence it has shown that something reasonable has been done to prevent it in the future. Remember, this will assist in collating the evidence of the schools “culture of safety” It also helps the culture grow through the review process.

### **7.16 Accident & Near Miss Review**

A review and summary will be made up to show any trends in accidents/near misses. This will be sent to the BKSA Training department to help prevent re-occurrence in other locations. Training schemes will be adjusted to help educate new students.

## **8 Insurance**

An Insurance policy will be held by the school/provider for the activity of kitesurfing tuition. Where staff are employed employers liability insurance will be needed.

It is worth noting. The insurance policy does not keep people safe. It is a back up for when it goes wrong. In health and safety terms it is a bit of paper. However, it is reasonable to say that it shows that a school is trying to be responsible for its actions.

## 9 Supporting the BKSA

The BKSA endeavors to aid the growth of the sport and therefore needs the backing from people who benefit from the sport.

It is reasonable to ask that schools affiliated with the BKSA support its constitution and respect its advice and rules. It would also expect that within every course run that the BKSA are advertised in a positive way by its instructors and memberships sold to people entering the sport. A number of free publications are given to schools for distribution to the general public and kitesurfers alike. Kiteboarder cards, Guides to ride, join now flyers, stickers. Please feel free to request more of any or all these publications at anytime during the year if you run out.

## **10 BKSA Schools Pack**

**Every BKSA school undergoes an inspection of procedures underlined in this manual. They will also receive a BKSA Schools pack containing the following:**

- **BKSA Flag**
- **Recognised school stickers**
- **Recognised School Certificate**
- **BKSA Guide to Ride booklet (x 50)**
- **BKSA Join now flyer (x 100)**
- **BKSA Kiteboarder Cards (x 100)**
- **BKSA Scheme outline booklet**
- **BKSA Instructor Training Flipchart**
- **BKSA Schools Manual**
- **BKSA T Shirt**
- **BKSA Stickers (x 10)**
- **Kitesurfing A Guide book, Ian Curer**

## 11 Inspection fees

The school approval costs are as follows:

Year 1                £250

Year 2                £200

Year 3                £200

The school recognition fee is to be collected on the 1<sup>st</sup> March annually, the inspection date will then be liased between the inspector and the school.

*Please note payment of BKSA school recognition fee in no way guarantee's recognition to the BKSA schools network. Recognition is only granted post the satisfaction of all requirements outlined in the inspectors report.*

## 12 Benefits

- The BKSA is the national governing body for all kitesports in the UK.
- Become part of the national schools network for safe, professional and fun teaching of kitesurfing and its associated activities.
- Use official BKSA logo's, Publications and accreditations in advertising
- Have a dedicated page on the BKSA website for your schools displaying information, location, prices etc.
- Increase business and customers by up to 80% in some cases
- Gain comprehensive insurance cover to further protect in the event of legal proceedings
- Have access to a large information and consultancy department for help with all areas of training.
- Receive a schools pack worth over £100

## Contact Details

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