

## Training to be a cox, bow steer or single sculler at FBC – Guidance. 29/11/24 C Parker WSA (updated 5.6.25, V1.1)

- Club training and assessment of coxing and bow-steering determine the flags that members can safely go out in a club boat on the river (see appendix 1).
- For adult rowers, the competency levels to be reached are listed in the [Club Activity and Safety Handbook](#), as well as the spreadsheet of [approved coxes and bow-steers](#) and appendix 2 below.
- All members wishing to be assessed as cox, bow-steer or single sculler should have completed their supervised capsized drill and online training prior to assessment.
- British Rowing coxing guidance and capsized training modules can be accessed [here](#). The University capsized training module and test [here](#).
- **Juniors:** Once junior members show lots of awareness around boat skills, they will be taught to bow steer or cox. They will always be taught and closely supervised by a junior coach. The Club Junior Head Coach will sign off once they have the skills to cox or bow-steer without such close attention, and maintain a list of approved junior coxes and bow-steers.

### Training:

#### Coxing:

It is helpful for new coxes to have had experience of rowing/sculling in a single, double or 4 to understand how boats are manoeuvred. The Red Kites provide an ideal starting point for new coxes, fine boats could be used with suitable crew competences as coxes learn and progress, moving to 4x+/4+. Only after sufficient skill is demonstrated should they move to coxing eights. A first session in the tank or red kite allows calls and timing to be practised in controlled conditions.

Training **MUST** be undertaken by a club coach or an experienced club cox with Silver or Gold. The flag conditions and crew experience for training and assessment outings **MUST** not exceed those described in the coxing level being trained for. EG a novice cox should only go out in green flag initially and later, as they gain experience, in blue flag only with experienced crew and always with a trainer or assessor. See appendix 1. New coxes **MUST** never cox novice crews.

Training should be extended over multiple sessions to allow different conditions and content to be observed. Initially, the trainer should be at stroke seat in the boat, and can later progress to bank riding the crew as the cox gains experience.

#### Bowsteers:

Trainee Bowsteers should start in a double, and only progress to a quad once they have gained experience, and they should always be with a trainer until they have successfully completed assessment.

Training **MUST** be undertaken by a club coach or experienced bowsteer at or above the bowsteer level being trained for, but a minimum silver. I.e. a silver bowsteer or coach can

train a novice or bronze bowsteer. A gold bowsteer or coach can supervise a silver bowsteer training for gold.

The flag conditions and crew experience for training and assessment outings MUST be as described in the bowsteer level being trained for. EG a novice bowsteer should only go out in a green or later blue flag with experienced crew and always with a trainer or assessor (see appendix 1).

Training can be extended over multiple sessions to allow different conditions and content to be observed. For novice bowsteers, the trainer should initially be at the 2 seat in the boat, and can later progress to other seats or bank riding the crew as the bowsteer gains skills.

### Single sculling:

Novice single scullers MUST be coached by a trained club or external coach, initially in green flag conditions. Training sculls can be used. Many scullers will have experience sculling in a quad and double before single sculling but this is not essential.

## Assessments:

Once trainee coxs, bowsteers and single scullers have reached the level required (See criteria on the competency spreadsheet appendix 2) they should book an assessment.

Cox, bowsteers and single scullers MUST be assessed by **senior club officials /coaches with appropriate coxing/bow-steering experience** (i.e. at or above the level being assessed) before being signed off to undertake unsupervised outings as per the table below.

**Club Assessors are listed on the coxing bowsteer [list](#)**

Assessments may take more than one outing, and should be recorded by the assessor [on this form](#) and assessments should specify whether the assessment was single scull, double or quad for bowsteer in the notes. Kezia Hobson, club lead cox will maintain the [list](#) of assessed coxes / bow steers / single scullers .

### Appendix 1. Competence vs Flag

	Crew level				
Cox Level	Novice/LTR	Post Learn to row	post LTR mixed with majority experienced	competent/ experienced	Very Highly competent /experienced
Bronze	No				
Silver					
Gold					Dark Red

	Crew level				
Bow steer level	Novice/LTR	Post Learn to row	post LTR mixed with majority experienced	competent/ experienced	Very Highly competent /experienced
Bronze	No	No			
Silver					
Gold					Dark Red

## Appendix 2

Competence Steering Level	Notes
Evidence	
<b>Bronze</b>	
Handling a boat	- from racks, trestles, to water etc
Boat checks (with crew)	- knowing which parts require checks
Water safety (basic requirements)	- life jackets, flag conditions, risk assessment criteria etc
Crew management (incl. launching + landing)	- handling boat to and from the water, using correct terminology for crew standard
Local navigation rules (incl OURCs)	- rights of way, spinning points (flag status dependent)
Following a course	- keeping to the correct side etc
Avoiding obstacles / traffic	- trying to keep the boat moving
Awareness of external factors (current / stream / weather conditions)	- e.g., maintaining a position; impact of run-off under Longbridges
Emergency stop	Demonstrate ability to stop the boat quickly and effectively - 'hold the boat hard'
Spinning effectively (base conditions)	- clearing your lane and arriving in the right place, pointing in the right direction, backing down
Landing safely	- slow and accurate -land going upstream - unless strong upstream wind, or locks
Clear calls (propulsion / manoeuvring)	- using correct calls to achieve required outcomes incl stopping
Basic rowing technique	- timing, squaring, depth
Timing of commands	- giving half of a stroke cycle before the command applies
<b>Touring Specific Bronze</b>	
Negotiating locks	- understanding the process and how to approach, park up, pack together within and pass through a lock
Landing against higher mooring levels	- "shipping oars" or otherwise parking up against a landing stage set higher than the boat
<b>Silver</b>	
Following a simple outing programme	- conforming to a general brief on session content
Take account of crew's skill levels	- check extent of responses to some advanced commands (e.g. "Hold it lightly")
Reading the river / anticipating and reacting	- taking account of other crews activities and intentions to reduce interruptions to your own crew
Use of stream	- taking account of stream patterns to improve line; using ferry-glide effect etc
Reducing use of rudder	- minor adjustments when blades in the water etc
Advanced rowing technique	- prompting technical points to improve crew coordination and propulsion
<b>Touring Specific Silver</b>	
Managing a touring crew	- acting as Crew Captain (additional criteria to be advised)
<b>Gold</b>	
Spinning effectively (challenging conditions*)	- e.g. reverse spinning when appropriate (* = high stream, heavy traffic etc)
Following and adapting a complex outing plan	- understanding the purpose of a session plan and adapting to the conditions, where necessary
Rules of competition	- read and understand some rules of racing
Choosing a racing line	- use or take account of current and conditions to optimise your racing course
Attaching to a stake boat / starting stage	- attach safely and then adjust direction, according to any side winds
Motivating crews	- know your crew and what they respond to; have a list of useful, relevant calls
Tactical responses	- e.g. take advantage of your racing line or concede position, as appropriate