



Setting Standards for Safer Boating

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ABYC reviews each standard at least every five years at which time it may be reaffirmed, revised, or withdrawn. ABYC welcomes any written comments on the standards and Technical information reports.

**ABYC EDU-4 January, 2018
On-Water Instruction Standard
On-Water Education Project Technical
Committee**

EDU-4

ON-WATER INSTRUCTION STANDARD



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This list represents the membership at the time the Committee was balloted.

NOTE: Membership on a committee shall not in and of itself constitute an endorsement of ABYC or any document developed by the committee on which the member serves.

This standard was developed under procedures accredited as meeting the criteria for American National Standards. The Project Technical Committee that approved the Standard was balanced to ensure that individuals from competent and concerned interests have had an opportunity to participate.

This standard, which is the result of extended and careful consideration of available knowledge and experience on the subject, is intended to provide minimum performance requirements.

ABYC's Project Technical Committee meetings are open to the public. All contact regarding standards activity, interpretations, or meeting attendance should be directed to the ABYC Technical Department at comments@abycinc.org.

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REQUEST FOR INTERPRETATIONS

Upon written request, the On-Water Education PTC will render an interpretation of any requirement of the Standard. The request for interpretation should be clear and unambiguous. Requests should be presented to the PTC in a manner in which they may be answered in a yes or no fashion.

The committee reserves the right to reconsider any interpretation when or if additional information which might affect it becomes available to the PTC. Persons aggrieved by an interpretation may appeal to the Committee for reinterpretation.

EDU-4 On-Water Instruction Standard **National System of Standards for Recreational Boat Operation**

Title: On-Water Recreational Boating Skills Standard – INSTRUCTION

Purpose: To establish the national consensus-based standard for use by course providers for approach to design and delivery to raise the overall level of quality, availability and consistency of entry-level instruction in recreational boat operation.

This Standard accompanies the National On-Water Standards (NOWS) for recreational boating skills (*EDU-1 On-Water Power Standards; EDU-2 Skills-based HUMAN-propelled Boat Standard; EDU-3 Skills-based Sailboat Standard*) and assists education providers with developing and implementing programs that produce recreational SAIL, POWER, and HUMAN-propelled boat operators who:

- Can perform the skills identified by the NOWS;
- Have the knowledge needed to perform the NOWS skills; and
- Possess a positive attitude and good judgment toward safe recreational boating.

Scope: This is the core voluntary standard designed to apply to entry-level POWER, SAIL and HUMAN-propelled on-water skills-based courses in the U.S. states and territories and District of Columbia and function within a national system of standards for recreational boat operation.

Please Note: The number before each element within the standard is included for reference only and does not indicate any prescribed order, sequence, or priority.



1. The instructional approach will **include curriculums and course designs that encourage optimal learning** by:
 - Using current National On-Water Standards (NOWS).
 - Using experiential education as the primary method of delivery.
 - Combining and/or sequencing skills effectively.
2. The instructional approach will **manage student skills development** by:
 - Defining performance objectives.
 - Aligning student expectations with performance objectives.
 - Assessing student progress toward performance objectives (e.g., rubrics).
3. The instructional approach will **employ an effective student/instructor ratio** by:
 - Ensuring an adequate number of instructors are available to attend to the safety of all students involved.
 - Ensuring an adequate number of instructors to provide effective instruction with individualized attention (e.g., direction, coaching, feedback, etc.).
 - Considering available resources (e.g., time, boats, equipment, etc.)
4. The instructional approach will **encourage different types of students to participate** by:
 - Providing access to criteria for participation (e.g., age, weight, prerequisites, Essential Eligibility Criteria, etc.).
 - Informing students beforehand what they may achieve as a result of participation (e.g., skills, knowledge, enjoyment, certification, etc.).
 - Making reasonable modifications for students with disabilities.
5. The instructional approach will **prepare students for learning experience(s)** by:
 - Determining student's desires, expectations, etc.
 - Ensuring that students understand performance objectives.
 - Determining in advance students' unique needs (e.g., scheduling, diet, swimming ability, propensity to motion sickness, health/medical considerations, etc.).
6. The instructional approach will **support student learning during instruction** by:
 - Staying focused on performance objectives.
 - Adjusting pace to optimize learning.
 - Allowing time for personal reflection, individual practice, etc.
7. The instructional approach will **provide students with effective feedback** by:
 - Delivering feedback during and after the course.
 - Ensuring feedback is specific and actionable.
 - Using a variety of appropriate feedback tools (e.g., videos, diagrams, textbook reviews, visual aids, checklists, etc.).
8. The instructional approach will **ensure instructor effectiveness** by:
 - Selecting (e.g., identifying, recruiting, evaluating, hiring, etc.) qualified instructors.
 - Developing (e.g., preparing, assessing, supporting, mentoring, etc.) successful instructors.
 - Retaining (e.g., supporting, providing continuing education, compensation and opportunities for growth, etc.) quality instructors.



9. The instructional approach will **ensure instructors deliver quality program content** by:
 - Knowing the content being delivered.
 - Verbalizing and demonstrating skills effectively and with a positive attitude.
 - Modeling behaviors (e.g., wearing life jackets, using three points of contact, using proper skills even when not being demonstrated, etc.) that emphasize safety.
 10. The instructional approach will **promote student learning** by:
 - Providing support information (e.g., safety briefings, textbooks, handouts, pre-departure checklists, etc.) to enhance experiential activities.
 - Using a variety of instructional techniques (e.g., hands-on practice, guided self-discovery, teachable moments, repetitive practice drills, positive behavior reinforcement, etc.).
 - Encouraging students to seek additional practice opportunities.
 11. The instructional approach will **enable a safe learning environment** by:
 - Providing a comfortable physical environment (e.g., access to food and drinking water, bathroom facilities, shelter, life jackets, etc.) for students and instructors.
 - Providing an emotionally supportive environment (e.g., managing perceived and real emotional risks, allowing mistakes to be made safely, proactively identifying and addressing concerns, etc.).
 - Using appropriate strategies for coping with changing environmental/weather conditions (e.g., sun protection, access to foul weather gear, layered clothing, etc.)
 12. The instructional approach will **use boats, equipment and facilities appropriate for the instructional activity** by:
 - Ensuring boats and equipment needed to deliver an effective program are available and functional.
 - Ensuring availability and functionality of safety equipment (e.g., communication devices, rescue equipment, first-aid supplies, anchor, etc.).
 - Complying with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, manufacturer recommendations, etc.
 13. The instructional approach will **manage risk** by:
 - Creating and following risk management procedures (e.g., Emergency Action Plan [EAP]).
 - Reviewing procedures periodically and updating as needed.
 - Ensuring instructors are able to effectively implement emergency procedures.
 14. The instructional approach will **incorporate a program improvement process** by:
 - Reviewing course delivery, instructor effectiveness, and student outcomes against performance objectives.
 - Collecting student feedback on course effectiveness and customer satisfaction.
 - Looking externally to seek improvement ideas.
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*Origin and Development of EDU-4, On-Water
Instruction Standard*

This is the first publication of EDU-4. It is the work of the On-Water Education Project Technical Committee.

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