



British Canoeing

Sprint Racing Proposal - BUCS

Cycle 3

Final Submission - 13th October 2021

Summary

British Canoeing proposes the introduction of a flatwater Canoe Sprint event to the BUCS programme. This builds on the success of the existing Canoe Polo, Wild Water and Canoe Slalom discipline events.

This proposal has been prepared by British Canoeing, the National Governing Body for Paddlesport in the UK. The purpose of this proposal is to provide a rationale for the inclusion of Canoe Sprint racing into the BUCS Competition Programme. The proposal takes into account the strategic alignment of both bodies, resource implication and wider impact of introducing sprint racing into the BUCS framework.

Our aim is very much to create a vibrant, inclusive paddling event:

- A two-day event
- Engaging and attracting student-athlete types 2-4.
- Two distinct strands of competition. Open (all stable crafts) which presents an opportunity for those students new to paddling to race in accessible craft. and Championships (sprint racing boats) providing an opportunity for existing sprint paddlers to flourish in a sport they love.

Both Championship and Open craft categories will take part on flat water. Consequently they are less complex in comparison to other canoe disciplines based on white water. The BUCS Canoe Sprint event will engage those that discover the sport for the first time at university, those regular paddling competitors through to those who are part of existing development and performance pathways.

The proposed event aligns well with the BUCS strategy with the following headlines:

- Physical Activity & Health - the flatwater sprint event gives existing paddlers a new outlet for competitive paddling to help maintain levels of physical activity.
- Social & Recreational Sport - whilst the aim is very much around competition we know that paddlers will also enjoy the opportunity to socialise over the two days.
- Performance Sport - through the introduction of a Canoe Sprint event we will be able to provide an additional route accessible to all home nations within British Canoeing's development and performance pathways to support those student athletes within Higher Education institutions, across BUCS sport programmes.
- Professional & Workforce Development - we are keen an introduction to flatwater racing coaching sessions prior to the event. The aim is to help support and embed flatwater racing skills within institutions to help them grow and develop this discipline within their canoeing clubs and to support the running of the BUCS event in the long term.
- Inclusion - This proposal aims to integrate a PaddleAbility category within our "Open"

class which gives an opportunity for paddlers with any sort of disability to paddle in a flatwater event.

- Profile & Influence - Through the introduction of a sprint event we will increase the profile of BUCS within the Canoe Sprint and Marathon Racing communities and wider partners. We will also increase the profile of Canoe Sprint through exposure to a cohort of students who have not previously competed in the discipline.

The event will require minimal BUCS resources and run with support from British Canoeing staff and committees as necessary. The event would come under the umbrella of BUCS, with entries administered by BUCS and organised and delivered by a 3rd party organiser (the current administration fee associated with this model is 15%. i.e. BUCS will take the entry fees for the event and pay out 85% of the fees back to the organiser.)

There are a number of key reasons for canoe sprint racing to be include within the BUCS programme:

1. Significantly, there is a gap in provision. The Olympic discipline of sprint canoeing is missing from the BUCS sport programme.
2. Research has shown that there is clear demand from Institutions and from students for a sprint racing BUCS event.
3. British Canoeing Sprint Racing Committee have the development of a BUCS event as a key part of their strategy.
4. The proposal is not radical in its approach. We are using the models created from existing BUCS canoeing events and from existing domestic sprint racing events to create an offer that meets the needs of student-athletes.

Introduction

This proposal is being submitted by British Canoeing, the National Governing Body for Paddlesport in the UK. This proposal is focussed on the inclusion of the Olympic discipline of Canoe Sprint racing within the BUCS Sport Programme.

Canoeing has been part of the BUCS programme for over 17 years, initially with Wild Water Racing and Canoe Slalom events, followed by the development of a Canoe Polo tournament.

In 2019 a total of 34 institutions engaged with one or more canoe sport BUCS events with typically most institutions participating in at least two disciplines. (Polo=24, Slalom =17, WWR= 21).

Existing BUCS Canoeing Disciplines

Canoe Slalom

A total of 37 female athletes and 99 male athletes from 17 institutions paddled in the 2019 Canoe Slalom events. The event offers several different classes including C1, C2, K1, Open and Mixed Team events so there are a range of opportunities for all paddlers. At present the event is held at the Tees White Water Centre, an artificial white water course on the river Tees. BUCS points are awarded to 1st-4th place paddlers in each event as well as within team events.

The majority of participants sit with student- athlete types 2 and 3 indicating that they are keen to succeed and engage in some competitive opportunities but that this isn't their primary ambition. They are also likely to enjoy seasonal commitment and taking part from a recreational perspective. There is evidence that paddlers are coming into the event from more recreational backgrounds.

Due to the range of paddler experience at the event it does follow a unique format which some of the elite paddlers are not used to. The organising group have tried hard to address these issues with a separate slot for premier division (elite) paddlers whilst not losing the focus on offering an event that appeals to less competitive and more social paddlers too.

Safety is paramount and provision is made for both the more inexperienced paddlers and the premier division paddlers to ensure the event is attractive to both ends of the spectrum and supports their needs.

The event is one of the bigger British Canoeing domestic slalom events and is supported by officials from the British Canoeing Slalom Committee.

Wild Water Racing

A total of 57 female athletes and 100 male athletes from 21 different institutions paddled in the Wild Water Racing (WWR) events in 2019. At present the event is held at Washburn, Yorkshire.

The event is open to all levels of participants and sees participation by GB team athletes as well as those that may have only started taking part in wild water racing at the start of the Autumn term. The majority of participants sit with student-athlete types 2 and 3 indicating that they are keen to succeed and engage in some competitive opportunities but that this isn't their primary ambition. They are also likely to enjoy seasonal commitment and taking part from a recreational perspective. This was clearly demonstrated from the 2017 women's winner of the classic event. She comes from a recreational down river background rather than from any competitive paddling background. There is evidence that more paddlers are coming into the event from recreational river paddling and from other disciplines rather than through competitive wild water racing. WWR is also the event that Canoe Sprint athletes are encouraged to compete at in lieu of their own recognised BUCS Canoe Sprint event given the similarities in physical capacities between the two disciplines.

The event is by far the biggest WWR event in the British Canoeing calendar and attracts a large number of participants.

Safety is paramount and provision is made for the more inexperienced paddlers and the National Team paddlers to ensure the event is attractive to both ends of the spectrum.

The BUCS WWR event takes place over 1 weekend and provides both competitive and social experiences for paddlers. Team events are popular and give an additional opportunity for paddlers to compete as a group. BUCS points are awarded to 1st-4th place paddlers in each event as well as within team events.

Canoe Polo

Canoe polo is a team sport, with teams made of 5 players. A total of 51 teams from 24 different institutions entered the Canoe Polo event in 2019 with 12 'Old Boys' teams (alumni teams).

The BUCS Canoe Polo Competition takes place once a year usually in April and in recent years has been held at the permanent canoe polo pitches at Holme Pierrepont. The competition is over two days with a social event held in a marquee where the paddlers can mix with other competitors and socialise.

The event is the biggest Canoe Polo domestic event in the calendar and includes all levels of

paddlers with the majority coming from student-athlete type 2 and 3. However GB team paddlers also take part alongside complete novice polo players and paddlers from other disciplines. As a team sport this works well and teams are generally made up of a mix of experiences and paddler types.

Events include Open League (mixed teams), Women's League and also an Old Boys league for ex-university paddlers and volunteers.

BUCS points are allocated to those placed 1st-8th in the Open and Women's leagues.

The British Canoeing polo committee and the canoe polo referee sub-committee have supported the event for a number of years and offer an officials course the day before the event to train new officials.

New proposed BUCS Canoeing Discipline

Canoe Sprint

Canoe Sprint is an Olympic discipline (a full medal sport at the 1936 Berlin Games with the Women's category being added to the Olympic programme in 1948). Great Britain won its first Olympic medal in Canoe Sprint in 2000 at the Sydney Olympics when Tim Brabants took bronze in the K1M 1000m. Since then, Sprint athletes have now won a total of 9 Olympic medals. With the addition of paracanoe in 2016 we also won an additional 12 Paralympic medals.

There are already World and European University opportunities for Canoe Sprint racing which are supported by British Canoeing however there is no BUCS university/ college formal domestic competition.

Introducing the Canoe Sprint discipline would be appropriate for pathway and elite paddlers, as well as for less experienced paddlers. For the less experienced it offers a discipline which is less technical and with a lower barrier to participation than the 3 disciplines already on offer. There is a strong NGB engagement already around the development of a Canoe Sprint racing offer, with the current proposals being developed by a group led by British Canoeing, but also including representation from the British Canoeing Sprint Racing Committee, the British Canoeing events team and the World Class Programme and National Association Development Programmes.

Purpose

The development and delivery of a BUCS Sprint event will provide a more holistic and accessible canoeing opportunity for student participation. Currently Canoe Sprint is the only Olympic Canoe Sport not provided for within the BUCS programme. There is also currently no canoe BUCS provision specifically for disabled / Paddle Ability paddlers.

There is a clear gap currently in the canoeing provision, whilst there are 3 other disciplines within the BUCS programme there is currently no domestic opportunity for flatwater paddling. The Canoe Sprint flatwater discipline will provide connectivity from domestic to International competition. It can also be used as a selection event for the World University Canoe Sprint Championships (which is supported by British Canoeing).

Event Proposal

Our aim is very much to create a vibrant, inclusive paddling event.

To support a twin track approach we are proposing the development of 2 classes:

“Championship” - more experienced paddlers, where craft, race distances and rules must meet criteria laid out in British Canoeing sprint racing rules.

“Open” - any stable, safe kayak/canoe/Stand Up Paddleboard.

In order to create an inclusive event the “Open” class will have a PaddleAbility element. This will either be a standalone event in this class or paddlers will paddle together but be awarded medals as PaddleAbility winners (this will depend on numbers entering and ensuring we make viable, exciting races).

Proposed Event Programme

2 day programme

Event Categories

- Championship - flatwater boat as per British Canoeing sprint racing competition rules
- Open - any stable craft (including Sit on Tops, Open Canoes, SUPs etc)

Events

- Championship - Kayak/Canoe, Individual/Crew, Male/Female
- Open - Kayak/Canoe/SUP, Individual, Male/Female
- Bellboats - crew based open racing for fun

Distances

- 200m, 500m and up to 5000m (subject to change depending on venue). There is the possibility to expand the programme to include 1000m for example subject to review and feedback following the 1-3 years of delivery.

Off the water

- Camping on/near site
- Supportive, inclusive atmosphere
- Social event

Date

- April 2023 (TBC)

BUCS Points

It is proposed that BUCS points are awarded for Championships events only. Open events do not receive BUCS points (in line with Canoe Polo division B events and Rowing beginner events).

Potential Benefits

Our research shows that the event sits most naturally with student-athlete types 2, 3 and 4. The aim of the event is dual purpose and it has two distinct strands of competition. The Championship event provides opportunities in various different pathways for paddlers to flourish in a sport they love at a key transition point of their life as they move away from home. This sits alongside the Open event which presents an opportunity for those students new to paddling to race in accessible craft.

The introduction of this event provides those paddlers, particularly those in student-athlete type 3, extra opportunities and support through the discipline at university/ college. As with a lot of sports, we do struggle with paddler drop out in this age group. Providing an additional pathway for competitive flatwater paddlers enables them to stay within the competition pathway gaining extra racing and possible additional support via university/ college scholarship/ grants/ support service access. Helping to retain more Canoe Sprint paddlers in the sport.

There is also a potential to attract some student-athlete type 1 and 2s as a second entry point into the sport. Providing an opportunity for those who haven't had the opportunity to find competitive canoeing earlier in their life through clubs, schools or outdoor pursuits.

For type 4 student athletes the event will help address and ensure that Slalom and Sprint athletes are treated equally. As mentioned earlier a number of elite Canoe Sprint student athletes that are potentially future Olympic athletes already compete within BUCS events. Currently none have the opportunity to to compete in their own discipline at a BUCS event

(many elite Canoe Sprint athletes compete in the WWR events). Inclusion into BUCS would enhance the University sport profile of this Olympic discipline, better recognise these elite athletes and help in terms of facility access and scholarship support at different institutions.

Strategic alignment

This proposal aligns with a number of the BUCS Strategy strands:

Physical Activity & Health

The sprint event aims to develop a new pathway for paddlers. We know, through our membership research, that paddlers do drop out from the sport at key transition periods in their life. The flatwater Canoe Sprint event gives existing paddlers a new outlet for competitive paddling to help maintain levels of physical activity.

Whilst our proposal is primarily aimed at those paddlers who are already active in one of the canoeing disciplines we are also keen to support those that haven't yet 'found' canoeing. Through the development of an "Open" class event we aim to attract paddlers who may be newer to the sport. This is uniquely achievable within the flatwater events, the water conditions are less demanding and there is a greater range of boat craft available to suit the needs of the paddler regardless of their water confidence or previous experience.

Social & Recreational Sport

Our existing BUCS canoeing discipline events have a strong social element. Whilst the aim is very much around competition we know that paddlers also enjoy the opportunity to socialise over the 2 day events. A similar model is proposed for Canoe Sprint which gives competitive opportunities during the day alongside an opportunity to socialise with fellow paddlers.

Intervarsity Competition

At this stage our focus is on an event based competition for flatwater racing. At present the number of institutions and athletes interested would mean intervarsity events would currently not be viable in many circumstances. This event could however be a step towards the set up of intervarsity competitions.

Performance Sport

Central to our proposal is to help develop an environment for performance paddlers to develop whilst in Higher Education. Many elite level athletes on a performance trajectory to compete at an Olympic level are attending Higher Education Institutions. Through the introduction of a sprint event we will be able to provide an additional route accessible to all home nations within British Canoeing's performance pathway to develop within Higher Education institutions and across BUCS sport programmes.

Within the English development pathway a strong relationship with a number of institutions through TASS delivery already exists. This will be further strengthened and optimised through the increased recognition that BUCS inclusion brings to University sport.

Professional & Workforce Development

Our Canoe Polo BUCS event brings together institutions the day before the event and offers the opportunity to train (minimum 1) student as a match official. This not only helps support the efficient delivery of the event itself but also gives the opportunity to students to develop through an officiating pathway. It also means there is greater capacity for managing/developing informal intervarsity matches and leagues away from the national BUCS event.

We are keen to investigate this model within Canoe Sprint racing and provide an opportunity to offer either basic officiating/ event management training or an introduction to flatwater racing coaching sessions prior to the event. The aim is to help support and embed flatwater racing skills within institutions to help them grow and develop this discipline within their canoeing clubs and to support the running of the BUCS event in the long term. Our research showed that 45% of students who were unsure about the event highlighted additional coaching support as a key area which would encourage them to engage the event.

British Canoeing already offers a number of awards to develop sprint racing skills which we would recommend to University Clubs looking to develop their paddlers. The first of these is the Racing Explore Award which is designed to help paddlers have fun and feel confident in a racing canoe or kayak at the start of their journey into racing. The Racing Explore Award develops forward paddling technique and basic racing boat skills in both single and crew canoes and kayaks. Paddlers will create a proficient understanding of appropriate equipment usage and boat set up, learning to train for, and compete in the BUCS “Open” event.

We would encourage all English university canoe clubs to affiliate to British Canoeing. Welsh universities to affiliate to Canoe Wales, CANI in Northern Ireland and to the SCA in Scotland. In England this brings a number of key benefits including:

- Access to the dedicated Club Support team - Advice, guidance, club development support, webinars
- Access to The Clubhouse - Online resources, templates, guidance, and communicate with other clubs
- Quality Club and Champion Club - Club development programme and accreditation
- Club Associate membership - for all club members, providing access to entry level events and competitions, as well as member benefits.
- Managing Risk and Risk Assessment eLearning - Free access to CPD for key volunteers to develop their knowledge and expertise.
- DBS Checks

- Grant Support - Access to British Canoeing grants, and support for external applications

Inclusion

The aim is to integrate a PaddleAbility category within our “Open” class which gives an opportunity for paddlers with any sort of disability to paddle in a flatwater event.

Profile & Influence

Through the introduction of a Canoe Sprint event we will increase the profile of BUCS within the Canoe Sprint and Marathon Racing communities. Our England home nation development programme already works closely with a number of institutions through the TASS programme. Other relationships with key stakeholders could be more easily developed in support of student athlete development opportunities. We would also envisage that the competition would raise the profile of the sport as a whole in the UK as new athletes are exposed to Canoe Sprint for the first time.

Consultation and support

We undertook a robust consultation exercise to help inform the development of this proposal. We developed two surveys, firstly for student-athletes (or potential student-athletes) and secondly for institutions.

The student survey was shared to the British Canoeing membership (aged between 16-25), developing elite athletes (aged 16-25) in all of the home nation development programmes and our World Class Programme and via our Canoe Sprint and Marathon racing social media sites. We recognise some key challenges with the publicising of the survey in that:

- A small number of student athletes fall outside of the stated age category
- A large proportion of paddlers in this age category will be recreational, rather than competition paddlers
- A proportion of paddlers in this age group will take part in other canoeing disciplines.

We received a total of 334 responses which has given us some clear insight to help develop this proposal.

Student insight summary:

- **77% of respondents said they would be interested in a BUCS Flatwater event**
- 334 people completed the survey (57% Males 43% Females), the majority were white British (89%) and had no disability (87%)
- There was a mix of athletes across all year groups
- The majority of athletes completing the survey were BUCS type 2 (36%) and 3 (32%) athletes (“those who engage in recreational sport but also enjoy competition” and “competitive athletes who already compete in the sport”).
- 23% were from the top 2 BUCS student types (BUCS Type 5 and 4 - High performance)
- Of those who were unsure – most cited access to coaching and boats as reasons which may help encourage them to engage (both are elements we feel could be mitigated)
- Nearly half respondents said they were currently competing in Canoe Sprint or Marathon Racing – most of these compete in national Marathon Hasler races and/or national Sprint regattas)
- Just over half have never taken part in any BUCS canoeing events before (19% had taken part in slalom, 20% in WWR and 28% in Polo)
- 67% preferred a stand alone event at a regatta venue, 52% a stand alone event run by clubs and 51% linked to an existing national regatta (respondents could tick any number of preferred options)
- Individual kayak races were most popular

- Shorter distances were more popular (200m - 209 responses and 500m - 214 responses) but of those who specified “other” 59 responses asked for Marathon distance events
- June/ July was the most popular time of year for the event (33%) – although a similar percentage of respondents had no preference
- There was no preference for a 1 or 2 day event

Our institution survey proved to be challenging. Our existing BUCS canoeing events are all delivered by 3rd parties and as such we do not have access to the direct institution contact details for all those that have entered in recent years.

We were able to pull together a generic contact list for institutions through publically available contact information and through TASS due to the strong working relationship between the England Home Nation development programme and the TASS Talent Delivery Site network.

In total we sent the survey directly to 53 Institutions who we felt represented those that have/ potentially have an interest in flatwater canoeing.

We followed the survey up with phone calls and received 19 responses in total.

Institution insight summary:

- **Half of respondents said they would be interested in a BUCS flatwater event**
- The following institutions completed the survey: Liverpool University Canoe Club, Exeter, Heriot watt, University of Strathclyde, University of Leeds, Durham, Nottingham, Leeds University Canoe Club, Nottingham Trent University, Manchester Met, University of Birmingham, Bournemouth University, Exeter, Teesside University, University of East London, Leeds Beckett, University of Central Lancashire, University of Gloucestershire, University of St Andrews
- Exeter & Leeds completed it twice (different individuals)
- (Liverpool University Canoe Club, Exeter, Heriot watt, University of Strathclyde, University of Leeds, Durham, Nottingham, Leeds University Canoe Club, Nottingham Trent University, Manchester Met)
- The majority indicated a stand alone event would be preferred (not linked to an existing national regatta)
- There was no clear preference where the event should take place
- There was a preference for the event to be aimed at BUCS type 2 (11 responses) and 3 (7 responses) athletes (“those who engage in recreational sport but also enjoy competition” and “competitive athletes who already compete in the sport”).
- There was less interest in an event that targets high performance/ highly competitive athletes
- Most institutions felt that individual kayak races would be of most interest in shorter

- distances (200/500m)
- Only 4 institutions felt students would have access to the appropriate equipment (9 felt they would not have access)
 - March/ April was the preferred time of year for holding an event with no particular preference over a 1 or 2 day event

In addition to our surveys we have also consulted all home nation development programmes as our proposal is relevant to (and supported by) all the home nation pathways.

We have set up an internal working group to lead the development of the proposal and ultimately the planning around event delivery. The group is made up of:

British Canoeing Sports Development Manager (Chair)

British Canoeing Director of Paddlesport

British Canoeing Head of Events

British Canoeing Head of Talent

British Canoeing Podium Potential Technical Coach

Sprint Racing Committee Chair

National Regatta Chief Official

Scottish Canoeing Association Head of Performance and Pathways

Resource implications

Running of the event will be tendered out in the first instance with close support from both the British Canoeing Events Team and Sprint Racing Committee. The tender document will have clearly set key deliverables, minimum requirements and event quality assurance standards.

A tendering process will allow the event to operate outside the national domestic racing structure. This will allow for a greater focus on the BUCS aspect of the event, allow for the event timetable to be structured to meet the needs of the participants and ultimately to provide a higher quality provision and experience to student athletes. Organisations or clubs who may tender the event would have the opportunity to choose the location, which may include use of the National Regatta Centre at Holme Pierrepont or may utilise other appropriate facilities which can be found at clubs and hubs around the UK.

A key aspect of ensuring the proposal meets the demand for institutions and student athletes is the provision of equipment and potentially coaching support. Larger clubs, the sprint racing committee and British Canoeing have boats that could be loaned for events. Part of the tendering process will ask the event organiser to supply a number of craft. A lack of racing boats was raised in the consultation as a challenge for a number of paddlers/ institutions. If the organising organisation were a club this would be more achievable and would form a key part of the tendering process.

British Canoeing will develop a 'How to get into Racing guidance document' to share with university clubs. This will include useful information around coaching and leadership qualifications, personal development opportunities and signposting to key contacts and local club details.

British Canoeing will also investigate how best to link institutions with existing racing clubs to enable boat loans for training and preparation for the BUCS event. In the first instance this will just be a dedicated email/ phone number for institutions to call to place a request.

Entry fees would be set on a par with our other individual disciplines (£20-30 for an individual event). Entries will be administered through the BUCS entry system and we would request some support (as per other canoeing events) from a BUCS Event Administrator.

Costs can vary considerably between venues depending on what facilities are available at that club. However an indicative budget has been outlined below based on major domestic flatwater canoeing events held at club venues.

		Income	Expenditure
Entry fees (100 entries @ £28 pp)		2800	
Prizes			250.00
Consumables/ stationery			100.00
Printing/ notices			100.00
Paddler bibs/ numbers/ safety pins			100.00
Volunteer refreshments			75.00
Tent/ gazebos/ barriers			100.00
Power cables/ generator hire			150.00
Safety boats/ fuel/ transport			500.00
Hire of extra space/ field for event/ parking			250.00
Extra portaloos/ changing facilities			250.00
Bin/ skip hire			145.00
Basic course layout/ markers for finish/ start etc			200.00
BUCS fee			420.00
Total		2800.00	2640.00

Events would be self-sustained and would not require any other additional input or resource from BUCS other than promotion of the event and management of entries (as per current practice with the existing disciplines). A social event would be integrated with the competition, the budget and solution for this will be dependent on the venue.

BUCS would retain 15% of the entry fees with the remaining 85% going to the event organiser. If the event is run at a club location then facility hire costs will be minimal. This is likely to be the preferred model. Using a regatta lake adds substantial costs and is not necessarily viable in the first instance.

The location of the event would likely be central or Southern based providing for a better geographic coverage compared to the other BUCS events (currently based in Stockton-on Tees, Yorkshire and Nottingham).

Wider Impact Assessment

This proposal sits within wider plans detailed within British Canoeing Sprint Racing Committee 4 year plan (the Sprint Racing Committee have authority, delegated by the British Canoeing Board, to develop and deliver domestic Canoe Sprint racing opportunities and events). Additional Canoe Sprint racing opportunities are a central part of this plan. The committee has an existing mechanism in place to develop this initially through a sub group to create a phased implementation plan outlining these additional opportunities and then supporting clubs to deliver events. The BUCS Canoe Sprint event is a key part of the strategy and the support of the Sprint Racing Committee, growing club run events, is vital.

There is an established workforce with the Sprint Racing Committee, the regatta sub committee and within clubs to deliver events. The British Canoeing events team has also built in capacity within their 2022 annual plan to support the event.

We are keen to extend the workforce and will look to offer coach/ official development opportunities linked with the BUCS event.

Inclusion at BUCS level will help us to further strengthen relationships and partnerships with Universities. We can look to leverage more investment from institutions both in the form of investment into bespoke University Canoe Sprint coaching roles all to the benefit of student athletes.

Being included within the BUCS programme will also help establish the Sprint Performance Academy programme more easily. British Canoeing has developed a whole sport plan for Canoe Sprint performance strategy and a key action within this is the development of Sprint Performance Academies providing high quality, localised support to the best developing U23 athletes. Inclusion within BUCS will raise the profile of Canoe Sprint and more institutions will prioritise Canoe Sprint which in turn will make it more attractive to a great range of support/investment. This will help better support those athletes that are based at Academies but also those based at other institutions outside the Sprint Performance Academy network as they pursue specific academic pathways

A high number of performing and developing athletes are dual career athletes. The proposal would positively impact on the dual career offer of the sport, athletes would be better recognised and supported by their institutions, sympathetic more to the needs of their sport. Currently Sprint athletes are only able to attend the WWR BUCS event which can be at a conflicting point in the year for their season preparations.

Key Performance Indicators

Key metrics to evaluate the success of the event:

- From 2022 delivery of an annual sprint BUCS event engaging students from student athlete types 2-4 across two event categories.
- Year 2, introduction of a workforce development programme engaging representatives from more than 10 institutions.
- Year 3, entries from more than 20 institutions and over 100 students.
- Annual feedback survey issued with clear actions identified for development of the event.
- In the long term seeing increased levels of retention from U23's within the sprint canoeing pathway

Conclusion

Sprint Racing is an Olympic discipline and has been missing from the BUCS programme. Its inclusion will provide a valuable additional competition to student-athletes in Higher and Further Education.

There are a number of key reasons for canoe sprint racing to be include within the BUCS programme:

5. Significantly, there is a gap in provision. The Olympic discipline of sprint canoeing is missing from the BUCS sport programme.
6. Research has shown that there is clear demand from Institutions and from students for a sprint racing BUCS event.
7. British Canoeing Sprint Racing Committee have the development of a BUCS event as a key part of their strategy.
8. The proposal is not radical in its approach. We are using the models created from existing BUCS canoeing events and from existing domestic sprint racing events to create an offer that meets the needs of student-athletes.

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Any further questions please contact anna.gray@britishcanoeing.org.uk