

## Coaching and Teaching in Clubs

It is vital for the future of our sport that participants are confident in the quality of activities offered by Swim Wales' affiliated organisations. It is also very important that clubs, administrators, coaches and teachers have the peace of mind that they are covered by appropriate insurance. The following statement and guidance covers Swim Wales' expectations of clubs in relation to the level of coaching and teaching **in all disciplines** in the club environment. This is also the standard that is required by our insurers in relation to a club's liability insurance.

The following is offered as guidance as to the standards expected by Swim Wales and agreed with our insurers. If this guidance is not followed then club insurance cover may be invalidated.

### Coaching Guidance

The nature of coaching and training across the aquatic sports covers a wide range of activities and it is impossible to issue a statement that covers all eventualities.

Swim Wales' expectation is that a club should have a minimum of one Level 2 coach or above on poolside who is responsible for the activities taking place. If they do not, it will be the responsibility of the club to determine the level of competency/qualification required and demonstrate why they do not need a Level 2 coach for that session by undertaking a risk assessment and ensuring all relevant controls to mitigate any risks identified are in place. Clubs should have a development plan in place to develop a coach to achieve a Level 2 certificate as soon as is practicable to meet the requirements.

Level 1 assistant coach/es may coach under the supervision of the Level 2 coach.

Swim Wales affiliated clubs are required to use NGB approved qualifications.

Coaches are qualified and insured to coach within the scope of their qualification and any other relevant training that they have undertaken and successfully completed. Coaches must not deliver activities beyond the scope of their expertise and competence. This relates to poolside and dry-side training.

A Level 2 swimming teacher may be appropriate to run a swimming club training session provided that they deliver content within the scope of their qualification.

Having one Level 2 coach on poolside is viewed as a minimum expectation. There may be activities that require higher level coaches or more than one coach on poolside. In this instance, the club must ensure



that the appropriate number and quality of coaches are present for the activity.

Coaching triathletes: it is the responsibility of the club to ensure they are aware of the level of training, additional coaching qualifications required and ensure coaches have the appropriate credentials. Coaches should ensure that they are qualified to operate at the level and in the environment where they are coaching. Swimming Clubs operating training for the single triathlon discipline of swimming will be restricted to coaching in the environment and activities as outlined by their coaching qualification.

### Further information and example

Coaching qualifications introduce principles and methods of coaching. It is expected that coaches will maintain and develop their knowledge through formal and informal learning and apply this in a suitable way with their athletes. This should always be done with athlete welfare and safety at the forefront and the coach should be confident that they can apply knowledge safely and effectively. This should not exceed the competence level of the coach.

As an *example*, a Level 2 swimming coach may read about basic stretching techniques for post training cool-downs in a reputable resource and apply these with their athletes having assessed the risk and the competence of the athletes to perform the stretches safely and effectively.

The same coach should not however be developing a weight-training programme for athletes unless they have a relevant, recognised and valid qualification in this field and is competent to deliver this sort of activity. It is impossible to describe all examples of this type, it is for the club management committee and the coach to exercise their judgement, producing a risk assessment of the activities to determine their suitability, ensuring that the safety and welfare of athletes is their primary concern.

### Teaching Guidance

For clubs delivering Learn to Swim a minimum of a Level 2 teacher must be used. A Level 1 assistant teacher(s) may teach under the supervision of the Level 2 teacher.

Swim Wales affiliated clubs are required to use NGB approved qualifications and deliver the Learn to Swim Wales Framework only.

The supervisory aspect relates to two main areas, i.e. safe practise and best practise and provides the opportunity for the Level 1 Assistant teacher to be mentored by the supervisory teacher.

The degree of supervision and support required will vary and should be reflected in a risk assessment carried out by the club Managements Committee and the supervisory (Level 2) teacher. The risk assessment will take into account a range of factors including:-



- Competence and experience of the Level 1 Assistant teacher
- Lifeguard provision
- Design of the pool and where the teaching is taking place
- Ability of pupils being taught by the assistant and the supervising teacher

Ultimately, the responsibility for the group being taught by the Level 1 Assistant teacher rests with the supervising teacher. It is essential, therefore, that the supervising teacher is positioned close enough to the Level 1 Assistant teacher to be able to observe the teaching that is taking place and to intervene if this is considered necessary.

The role being carried out by the supervising teacher will impact upon the number of teachers being supervised at any one time. The risk assessment would need to take into consideration if the supervising teacher is not directly responsible for a group of swimmers (subject to the risk assessment referred to above). However, if the supervising teacher is directly responsible for teaching a group then it is recommended that their supervision of other assistants be limited to a maximum of one and that the lifeguarding is undertaken by an additional person not included in the teaching process.