

Swim Wales Guidance

Re: 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.

Swim Coaching Guidance

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

Swim Wales' expectation is that a swimming club should have a minimum of one certificated swim coach, for example someone holding either a Swim England Swim Coach (SESC), a Swim Wales Coaching Certificate, Swimming (SWCCS) or a Swim England Senior Swim Coach (SESSC) 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 required and demonstrate why they do not need an appropriately certificated 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 the appropriate certificate (as highlighted above) as soon as is practicable to meet the requirements.

Those coaches who hold the Swim England, Assistant Swim Coach certificate may coach under the supervision of a certificated swim coach (as detailed above)

Swim Wales affiliated clubs are also required to use NGB approved swim coaching courses.

Coaches are certificated and insured to coach within the scope of their certificate 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 includes poolside and dry-side training.

A Swim England Level 2 qualified swimming teacher (or equivalent) may be appropriate to run a swimming club training session provided that they deliver content within the scope of their qualification.

There may be activities that require higher level coaches or more than one coach on poolside.

The club must ensure that the appropriate number and quality of coaches are present to meet the activities being undertaken

Other Sports e.g. 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 to coach these other sporting activities.

Further information and examples

Swim Coaching courses 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 certificated swimming coach (e.g. SESC, SWCCS) may learn 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 a Learn to Swim programme a minimum of a SEQ Level 2 qualified teacher must be used. A SEQ Level 1 SAT qualified teacher, may teach under the supervision of the SEQ Level 2 teacher.

The supervisory aspect relates to two main areas, i.e. safe practise and best practise and provides the opportunity for the SEQ Level 1 SAT qualified 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 (please refer to Risk Assessment - (<https://www.swimwales.org/download-key-documents/>), carried out by the club Management Committee and the supervisory teacher (SEQ Level 2 TS qualified). The risk assessment will take into account a range of factors including:-

- Competence, experience and qualifications of the swim teachers.
- Competence and ability of the swim teachers.
- 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 SAT qualified assistant teacher rests with the supervising teacher. It is essential, therefore, that the supervising teacher is positioned close enough to the qualified 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.



If a club has any queries, or need further guidance please contact Aquatic Development aquaticdevelopment@swimwales.org