



Health & Safety Policy

Durham City Aquatics (hereafter referred to as DCA or “the Club”) aims to operate in a safe working environment and to provide a duty of care to all members of the Club whilst participating in activities run by the Club and its coaches and poolside helpers.

This Policy relating to the safety of such activities aims to guide all Club members in their efforts to achieve a safe working environment, to help prevent accidents and to ensure a consistency in the levels of safety provision provided.

The Club will continue to work with the Operating Authorities of each pool used for Club activities and have an obligation to co-operate with such Authorities on matters of Health and Safety.

The Club’s Executive Committee (or their appointed representative) will be responsible for the operation of the Health and Safety Policy and also its periodic review. Changes should be made to the Health & Safety Policy as required and following reviews of the relevant legislation and guidance from Professional Organisations such as the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management and Sports Governing Bodies such as Swim England (SE)).

2. BASIS OF THE SAFETY POLICY

Apart from the fact that the promotion of safety within sporting environments is seen as best practice, DCA also has a legal obligation to ensure the safety of those participating in the activities run by the Club. Failure to carry out this obligation could result in a claim against the Club for negligence.

From the outset, any water based activity carries certain specific risks – the most obvious being drowning – along with the more general risks of sporting activities. Risk Assessment documents compiled by the Club should therefore be readily accessible for reference and should be emailed to the relevant coaches and poolside helpers on an annual basis. The Club will also seek copies of Risk Assessments from each of the Pool Operators (or at least have access to them if necessary) and also copies of the respective Pool Safety Operating Procedures. These documents are legal requirements for Pool Operators and should therefore be already compiled.

3. SAFETY WITHIN SWIMMING SESSIONS

As the main activity of the Club revolves around swimming activities, consideration must be given to the operation of these sessions. The main bulk of responsibility for safety falls to the Club’s coaches and poolside helpers as they provide



direct instruction to the participants in each session. However, when hiring swimming pools, gyms, classrooms or other such facilities from the operators of these facilities, it is the operator who is charged with a legal duty of care to the hirers (i.e. DCA) to ensure that the facilities are safe and operated properly and in accordance with current regulations and best practice.

3.1 QUALIFICATIONS OF CLUB COACHES AND POOLSIDE HELPERS

In order for the Club to maintain its duty of care, it is important to ensure that all coaches and poolside helpers operating sessions (or assisting) should be appropriately trained and qualified. The following will therefore apply:

3.1.1 Every session will have a person present who is qualified to provide the necessary safety cover for that session. This person will hold either:

- • RLSS National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches Or
- • “Lifesavers” National Pool Lifeguard Qualification

This can be either a member of the coaching team on duty for the session, or another person who will provide this cover but not be part of the teaching team on that session. It is quite possible that more than one person will be qualified with one of the above awards, and this will therefore provide above the minimum level of cover agreed.

3.1.2 At least one person in the Club will hold the Lifesavers National Pool Lifeguard Qualification.

3.1.3 Club Members will be encouraged to gain additional qualifications such as the HSE First Aid at Work (4 day) Certificate. This will provide additional cover – especially at the remote sites.

3.1.4 The Club will keep a record of all qualifications held by coaches and poolside helpers. This is not only for reasons of both best practice and efficiency, but this information would be required by the Health & Safety Executive should any serious incident occur.

3.1.5 The Club will organise ongoing / refresher / requalification training as necessary in order to keep all members providing safety cover up to date.

3.1.6 All Club coaches and poolside helpers who are in charge of sessions will be qualified within their respective discipline. The following rules will apply;

- • Those teaching a squad on their own will be qualified to a minimum of ASA Level 2 Teacher, Level 2 Coach or equivalent.
- • Level 1 Teachers and Level 1 Coaches (Lane Coaches) can take a squad whilst they train in the same pool as another group being trained by an ASA Level 2 or Level 3 Coach. In this case, the Level 2 or Level 3 Coach will have overall charge of the session.
- • Level 1 Teachers or Coaches can take an OCCASIONAL session to cover for staff shortages providing that approval is gained from the Head Coach or Assistant Coach on each occasion and that the Level 1 Teacher or Coach works to a programme provided by the regular coach.
- • Older swimmers are encouraged by the Club to help in the running of the Coaching Programme. Helping in such sessions is normally the starting point for a new volunteer to commence their coaching career within the club. Such “helpers” will be encouraged to undergo formal training and will always work under the direction of fully qualified personnel.
- • Water Polo sessions should be run by an Swim England Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 Water Polo Coach.

3.1.7 Any club member whose position involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of children will be required to undergo an enhanced personal background check through the Disclosure and Barring Service. This is to ensure a duty of care is provided

with regard to Safeguarding and Child Protection. In addition, the Club will arrange for coaches, committee members and relevant volunteers to attend the Safeguarding and Protecting Children Course, in conjunction with the ASA or Sports Coach UK, at periodic intervals.

3.2 POOLSIDE DRESS / UNIFORMS

For safety reasons, it is important that all Club coaches and poolside helpers are easily recognisable when working on the poolside and that the clothing they wear will not pose any threat to anyone or hamper the effectiveness of a rescue. It is for these reasons that:

3.2.1 All Club coaches and poolside helpers shall wear a club T-Shirt whilst performing poolside duties. This will be provided free of charge by the Club.

3.2.2 All Club coaches and poolside helpers shall wear either clean trainers or poolside shoes whilst working on the poolside.

3.2.3 All Club coaches and poolside helpers shall wear either shorts or tracksuit bottoms whilst working on the poolside. Jeans and other types of trouser are not acceptable as they do not allow for easy movement in rescue situations.

3.3 USE OF EQUIPMENT

In many cases, the use of equipment within training sessions can be of a specialist nature and therefore appropriate supervision is required. The Club will therefore adhere to the following:

3.3.1 Any coaching equipment used within structured training sessions and lessons will only be used under the direction of qualified supervision as outlined in section 3.1.

3.3.2 All coaches and poolside helpers will ensure that equipment is only brought out of storage when there is a need for that equipment as part of a lesson.

3.3.3 All equipment not being used should be safely stored away until its next use, in order to prevent loss or damage to the equipment or accidents arising from equipment being left around the poolside.

3.3.4 Water Polo goals, competition lane ropes and other large pieces of equipment will only be handled by pool staff at Freeman's Quay or, in exceptional circumstances, Club members over the age of 14 years.

3.3.5 Coaches and poolside helpers should check the safety of all equipment before issuing it to session participants.

3.3.6 Coaches and poolside helpers will only use equipment for the purpose it was designed, and will do so in accordance with current best practice. The use of training and teaching equipment is covered as part of the syllabus on ASA Teacher Training Courses.

3.3.7 Club members electing to provide their own teaching equipment have a responsibility to ensure that their own equipment is safe. If there is any doubt to the safety of such equipment, the coaches and poolside helpers should direct that this equipment is not to be used.

3.4 ACTIVITIES WITHIN SESSIONS

All practices and activities that take place must be properly controlled by qualified coaches and poolside helpers. The following will therefore apply:

3.4.1 Coaches and poolside helpers will only run activities that are safe. Direction on this will have been given when completing their coaching qualification courses.

3.4.2 All pool rules are to be rigorously enforced in whichever establishment activities are taking place. All signage relating to this in each facility should be followed. If coaches and poolside helpers are in any doubt as to the rules of an individual facility, the pool operator should be consulted.

3.4.3 All diving should be undertaken under qualified supervision, by at least a Level 2 Teacher/Coach, and only in appropriate depths of water. Under no circumstances should swimmers be allowed to dive into water of less than 1.5m in depth without qualified supervision and holding (or be training for) the Competitive Start Award.

3.4.4 No-one should ever dive into water of less than 0.9 metres under any circumstances.

3.4.5 The use of diving blocks should be under qualified supervision by at least a Level 2 Teacher/Coach, and only where the water depth permits.

3.4.6 Coaches and poolside helpers will ensure at all times that the activities taking place are appropriate to the participants' level of strength, skill and ability.

3.4.7 If the pool is being used for 2 separate activities (e.g. Squad Training and Adult Swimming) then both activities must be properly supervised by appropriate coaches and poolside helpers.

3.4.8 Where "fun" or "free play" elements are incorporated, a qualified Pool Lifeguard must be present as the Lifesavers National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches does not cover this activity.

3.4.9 If large floats, toys or inflatables are to be used as part of a "fun" session, a qualified Pool Lifeguard must be present as the Lifesavers National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches does not cover the use of these, even within a lesson.

3.4.10 If there is any doubt as to the suitability of an activity or session, the Head Coach, or his appointed deputy will have the final say on the matter.

4. USING A HIRED POOL

4.1 OPERATOR REQUIREMENTS

As the Club does not own a pool of its own, pool space must therefore be hired from pool operators. When using a pool operated by someone else, the operator should have a comprehensive set of documents and risk assessments relating to their facility. These are a requirement in order for the pool to be hired out. The Club will therefore do the following:

4.1.1 The Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOP) from each pool will be obtained from the Pool Operator. Copies of these should be given to coaches and poolside helpers working at each of the sites used. In addition, the Club should also hold a copy of Risk Assessments completed by the Pool Operator if it is deemed appropriate to do so.

4.1.2 In all cases, the PSOP provided by the Pool Operator will be followed by Club employees and volunteers.

4.1.3 The Club Secretary will report any defects found to the Pool Operator as it is not the responsibility of the Club to affect repairs or changes to a facility in any way.

4.1.4 Should Club coaches and poolside helpers find defects or are doubtful in any way regarding the safety of swimmers and Club coaches and poolside helpers, then the session will not take place. In such cases, compensation for a breach of a hire contract may be appropriate. Examples of defects include: lack of water clarity, cracked tiles, loose fittings, poor lighting, broken equipment, poor hygiene standards, etc.

4.1.5 In all cases it is the responsibility of the Pool Operator to ensure that the pool environment is safe as they are charged with a Duty of Care towards the hirer (i.e. DCASC). This will include (but this list is by no means exhaustive) water quality inclusive of adequate filtration and chlorination, pool and air temperatures, tiling and surrounds, lane ropes, drainage inlets and outlets, lighting, steps into the water, footbaths if applicable, signage, risk assessments etc.

4.1.6 Where, as part of a hire agreement, the Club elects to provide its own qualified coaches and poolside helpers, then it is the responsibility of the Club to ensure this requirement is achieved, not that of the Pool Operator.

4.2 FIRST AID PROVISION

The provision of adequate first aid facilities is a requirement under the First Aid at Work (Provision) Regulations 1981. The agreement with Durham County Council for the use of Freemans Quay Swimming Pool is as follows:

4.2.1 In the event of a rescue or incident requiring First Aid occurring during a Club session, the Club's coaches or poolside helpers will initially deal with the incident and will raise the alarm. Council Leisure Staff will then take over the "Management" of the incident when they arrive. This does not mean that they will directly take over the treatment of a casualty (as in some cases it can be inappropriate to pass a casualty from one rescuer to another) but will be in overall control of the situation. First Aid equipment is readily available in the First Aid Room.

4.2.2 Within the other facilities used, coaches and poolside helpers will have to deal with the situation according to protocols taught in training as no pool staff are on duty at these private facilities.

4.3 FACILITY HIRE AGREEMENTS

The Club will make formalised pool hire agreements with all pool operators for the pool time hired. Facility Hire Arrangements are arranged and held by the Club Secretary. This formalises the arrangements of the hire (including charges and first aid provision) and provides documentation for the Club should anything go wrong. The Facility Hire Agreement will also mean that the Pool Operator has a duty to make sure the facility is safe during the times hired by the Club.

NOP/EAP for each facility will be circulated to Club Coaches by the Club Secretary

4.4 PROVISION OF MOBILE TELEPHONES AND FIRST AID BOXES

The Club will ensure that coaches and poolside helpers have access to a mobile telephone and / or additional first aid boxes as required when working at the "remote sites". This will ensure that any failing on behalf of a pool operator in these areas will not impede on the effectiveness of a rescue should this ever become necessary.

5. SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

The Club will adopt the Swim England's child safeguarding policies and procedures as set out in Wavepower2020/2021.

6. WATER POLO GAMES

When Water Polo matches are being held, it is essential that adequate safety cover is provided. In all cases, the Club will provide such supervision for both the warm up and the match itself – unless by prior arrangement with the opponents. In such cases, the qualifications of the opponents “supervisors” should be checked before commencement of any warm up or match.

In addition to the above, all of the rules and procedures outlined in section 3 of this document will also apply.

7. CHAIN OF COMMAND

7.1 In the cases of the general running of the Club, the Executive Committee will make decisions as required. However, the Head Coach (and their appointed deputies) also have more specific duties:

7.2 The Head Coach will be responsible for the direction and content of all sessions within the Club structure.

7.3 The Head Coach will be responsible for the supervision of coaches and poolside helpers as necessary and will ensure that sessions are covered by appropriately qualified people.

7.4 In all cases of queries on policies relating to the direct provision of sessions by club coaches and poolside helpers, the Head Coach’s decision is final.

7.5 Within the Club, there may also be Level 1 coaches and helpers gaining valuable experience under the guidance of qualified instructors. The Club will ensure that these people operate under appropriate supervision and that their “supervisors” are identified to them.

8. RECORD KEEPING

Detailed and accurate record keeping is regarded as good practice and will also help with the efficient running of the Club. In addition to this, individual records could help to identify hidden illnesses or areas for concern and therefore enable coaches to be aware of such considerations within training sessions. The Club will therefore:

8.1 Pass on relevant information to the coaches and poolside helpers as it becomes available to ensure the ongoing safety of all swimmers.

8.2 Record any problems or occurrences that happen within a training session, taking appropriate action to ensure that they are not repeated. Any accidents or incidents must be recorded on the Club’s Incident Form and sent to the Club Secretary without delay in order to comply with the terms of the insurance. A copy of the Incident Form can be found at Appendix 2.

8.3 Keep all records in accordance with current Data Protection Legislation.

8.4 Ensure that information is passed on to club coaches and poolside helpers who are covering for an absent colleague, or who are new to the Club via the Head Coach and/or Squad Co-ordinators.

8.5 Risk Assessments are available on the Club Website and on request from the Club Secretary

8.6 Insurance documents are held by the Club Secretary.

9. GALAS AND COMPETITIONS

When either holding competitive events at a “home” pool, or attending such events at other pools, safety must be the primary consideration.

9.1 When hosting a competitive event, the Club will ensure the safety of all participants. A designated person will be responsible for this and full safety cover will be provided in the event of an incident. All coaches and poolside helpers providing safety cover will be adequately qualified to do so, holding one of the awards mentioned in section 3.1.1.

9.2 Safety announcements will be made as necessary to ensure a duty of care is provided and all team coaches from visiting teams will be made fully aware of safety related issues.

9.3 The Club will liaise with the pool operator when planning competitions to ensure all of the pool operator's requirements are met.

9.4 All swimmers and coaches will be made aware prior to the competition of the requirements at the pool relating to diving.

9.5 When attending competitions at other pools, coaches and poolside helpers will ensure that they pay attention to safety announcements and read safety notices, both posted at the pool or distributed with competitor information.

10. MONITORING OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

10.1 It is the responsibility of the Club Committee to monitor Health and Safety throughout the Club and to enforce policies as necessary. It should always be remembered, however, that all members of the Club have an obligation to follow Health and Safety rules and also to try to look after themselves and also each other.

10.2 Periodic reviews of Health and Safety arrangements and policies should be conducted every 12 – 18 months, with any changes being communicated to club coaches, poolside helpers and swimmers as necessary.

10.3 A Health and Safety representative will be nominated as a contact point, not only for Club members, but also for pool operators and competition organisers. On a day to day basis the initial point of contact will be the Club Secretary. Overall health and safety will be overseen by the Club Chair.

This would also mean that Health and Safety matters can be dealt with in a swift and efficient manner.

Approved – January 2020

Appendix 1

Pupil Teacher/Coach Ratios

Based upon guidance in "[Safe Supervision for Teaching and Coaching Swimming](#)" published by the Institute of Sport and Recreation and endorsed by the ASA, The Royal Life Saving Society UK and the Institute of Swimming

The guidance is currently "under review" and therefore the Club's policy will be updated once this review has been completed.

Club Activity	Teacher/Coaching Ratio	Notes
Squad Training (Competent, competitive swimmers)	1 : 30	Fully Qualified Level 2 Coach – normally with at least one other adult being present.

Water Polo (Beginners)	1:12 (1:4 for Level 1 Water Polo Coaches working under Supervision)	This can be raised to 2:20 where staffing levels permit. One member of staff must be a "Level 2 Coach"
Water Polo (training only)	1:20	Level 1/2 Coach
Masters Swimming	1:20	Can be a Level 1 Teacher or a lifeguard if no instruction is given.
Swimmers with disabilities	1:8 (with appropriate number of helpers).	Care must be taken to ensure that there are sufficient helpers in the water to provide a 1:1 ratio for those needing constant support and a sufficient number of other helpers to provide the degree of support demanded by the range of disabilities within the group.

Appendix 2

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT

Place..... Date
..... Time.....

Circumstances.....
.....
.....
.....

Has blame been apportioned? Yes / No If yes state by whom and in what circumstances:

(NOTE it is not the responsibility of the club to make further enquiries with a view to apportioning blame)

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.....
.....

Please outline any implied or actual threat of legal action arising out of the incident

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.....

DETAILS OF INJURED PERSON

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Age..... Tel No.....

Occupation.....

.....

WITNESSES (if available)

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

DETAILS OF PROPERTY DAMAGE

Name.....

Address.....

..... Tel

No.....

Full details of damage.....
.....
.....

ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Further comments / opinion (additional sheets should be attached if required)

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.....
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.....
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..... If appropriate
please use this space for a diagram of the incident

REPORT FORM COMPLETED BY

Name..... Position in club.....

Address.....

.....

Signature Date.....

SEND THIS FORM TO THE CLUB SECRETARY WITHOUT DELAY

Date Sent