Swim: Training

Activity scope

This document relates to student participation in Swimming Training as a curriculum activity. The following applies to coaching and training sessions conducted by schools as a school activity or by a school swimming club for competitive swimmers of programs.

A swimming squad is one where the focus is on improving stroke technique. These are often called mini-squads or junior squads and are mainly for swimmers transitioning from swimming and water safety lessons to a training squad.

A training squad is often called a senior squad and has a focus on improving all aspects of the swimmer to improve performance. A multifaceted approach to improving stroke technique, fitness levels, mentality, nutrition etc, will be utilised by the coach.

The following information is based on the Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Department of Justice and Attorney-General information guide for owners, operators and controllers of public swimming pools.

Facilities include municipal, commercial or school swimming pools. A pool is defined as an artificially created pool of water, either indoors or outdoors with a water-filtering/circulation system.

Special considerations

- At least two adults must be present during swimming activities except in the situation where students have been trained to respond correctly in an emergency in Years 8-12. In this situation, one teacher may be sufficient to fulfil both recovery and supervision roles required of an emergency procedure. Their correct response should include clearing the water and providing adequate assistance, such as seeking adult help, summoning an ambulance and/or acting in a support role in resuscitation, if necessary.
- At least one adult must hold the minimum qualifications as outlined below under minimum activity-specific qualifications for supervisors.
- At least one adult must be ready at all times to enter the water and be competent to assist a student. At no time should an adult leader rely solely on students to recover a swimmer in difficulty.
- Prior to the commencement of the school swimming program, a safety induction session outlining risk management for the activity should be conducted with adults involved in the delivery of the program.
- An adult to student ratio of 1:25 is recommended for this activity for groups which contain only swimmers.
- If all participants are competent swimmers in a familiar environment with a great deal of prior experience between the swimmers and the coach, much larger ratios can be safely managed, however, the actual levels should be set based on a prudent risk management assessment.
- Should one or more swimmers be classified as a Learner or “non-Swimmer”, then the ratios must default to the level of the least capable student. Refer to Swim: Learn to Swim and Water Safety guideline.

Minimum activity-specific qualifications for supervisors

- For the adult taking overall responsibility for swimming and water safety:
  - a Bronze Medallion or equivalent (e.g. Pool Lifeguard), OR
  - a statement of attainment from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) or governing sporting body covering the SISCAQU202A Perform basic water rescue or equivalent unit of competency, OR
  - Competence (demonstrated ability) to recognise, prevent and respond to emergency in, on and around the swimming pool. A teacher could demonstrate competency through all of the following:
    - current first aid qualifications including Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) or immediate access to first aid facilities, including qualified personnel
    - identify a rescue plan and appropriate rescue aids
    - identify a person in difficulty
• demonstrated capacity to undertake a non-swimming and swimming rescue exercise at the facility or comparable aquatic environment (e.g. rope throw rescue, swim to the centre of the pool and retrieve a weighted object from the deepest part of the pool).

• **Note:** Competency is to be assessed annually and considers the aquatic environment that the activity is taking place in to ensure currency and relevancy.

• In circumstances where one person holds both Bronze Medallion or equivalent and CPR qualifications and is involved in an emergency situation, another adult present will be required to ensure students exit the water safely and manage effective supervision of students.

**For the adult leading the activity:**

- a statement of attainment from an RTO or governing sporting body covering the SISSSWM301A *Teach the competitive strokes of swimming* unit of competency, **OR**
- Competence (demonstrated ability/experience) in the coaching of swimming. A teacher could demonstrate competency through two or more of the following:
  - knowledge of the activity and the associated hazards and risks
  - experience (i.e. previous involvement) in undertaking the activity
  - demonstrated ability and/or expertise to undertake the activity
  - possession of qualifications related to the activity.

**Minimum activity-specific equipment/facilities**

- Flotation aids and reaching aids should be readily available at several locations within the venue. Reaching aids may include light poles or ropes with a float attached.

- Schools should seek confirmation from the swimming pool facility regarding the provision of water quality advice, emergency action plans, rescue processes and roles and availability and qualifications of supervisory personnel on site.

- Consider the use of goggles.

- Consider the use of swimming caps, especially for long hair.

- Ensure chemicals and machinery are kept in locked areas away from student access.

**Activity-specific hazards/risks and suggested control measures**

- Ensure that there is at least one adult outside the water at all times, ready to perform rescue if required (the number of adults required depends on student numbers).

- Where grouping is used to provide for a wide range of abilities, it is recommended that there be one adult per group.

- Build safety checks (e.g. a buddy system or roll checks) into lesson procedures.

- Where close supervision is necessary, the number of students in the water at any one time should be limited.

- Avoid lengthy and fatiguing training sessions harmful to a student’s health and welfare.

- Continuously monitor students for signs of fatigue and exhaustion.

- Diving activities must be supervised at all times.

- Undertake a risk assessment regarding the appropriateness of allowing swimmers to dive into the pool from a flat or elevated (blocks) position. Consider not allowing diving.

- Instruct students regarding safe movement around and inside the pool.

- Ensure there is a clearly defined emergency procedure that is appropriate to the conditions at each water venue.

- Define the boundaries of the safe swimming area. It is recommended that a rope or floats be used.

- Ensure that the [Board of Swimming Australia Pool Depth guidelines](#) are followed, assumes a level of competence:
  - less than 0.9 metre – absolutely NO dive entry
  - 0.9 metre to less than 1 metre – concourse dive (providing concourse is not more than 0.2 metre above the water surface)
  - 1 metre to less than 1.2 metres – concourse or platform dive (providing concourse or platform is not more than 0.4 metre above the water surface)
  - 1.2 metres or more – platform dive (as long as the platform is not more than 0.75 metre above the water surface)
o 1.5 metres recommended for learner divers.

- Ensure that school pool gates are locked when pool is not in use.
- Ensure all students in the water are in sight of at least one adult at all times.
- Adopt signals for assistance required.
- Modify activities to match the skill and fitness levels of students (age and ability levels of the students and the degree of difficulty of the activities should be considered).
- Students are not to enter the water until instructed to do so by the teacher or leader.
- Restrict underwater swimming to short-duration activities under close supervision.
- Consider the temperature of water.
- Ensure that the water depth is adequate for the activity.
- Give special consideration to the situation during swimming carnivals when relay swimmers enter the shallow end of the pool.
- Observe any warnings regarding water quality.
- If flotation aids are used, ensure that they are checked for correct fit.
- Store teaching aids separately from chemical stores and plant rooms.

Useful activity-specific links

- Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers’ Association
  http://www.ascta.com

- AUSTSWIM

- Australian Water Safety Council

- Board of Swimming Australia Pool Depth Guidelines

- Get Active Queensland Accreditation Program

- Queensland School Sport Unit

- Royal Life Saving

- School Swimming Pools - Operation and Management

- Swim Australia

- Swimming Australia
  http://www.swimming.org.au

- Swim: Learn to Swim and Water Safety – Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment guideline

- Vocational Education and Training

- Workplace Health and Safety Queensland – Managing drowning risks at publicly accessible pools
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