

# **Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching)**

## **Certificate Specification**

## **Welcome to the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching) Certificate specification**

### **About the ASA**

The ASA has been in existence since 1869. It was the first governing body of swimming to be established in the world and today remains the English national governing body for swimming, diving, water polo, open water and synchronised swimming.

As well as supporting over 1,000 affiliated clubs, organising a range of competitions throughout England and developing a world-leading pathway for elite performers, the ASA operates a comprehensive certification programme for coaches – helping to drive up the quality of the workforce developing the current and future generations of elite performers

This Certificate has been developed through collaboration and partnership working, to ensure it is fit for purpose for Synchronised Swimming Assistants (Coaching) and the industry. The certificate will be reviewed on a regular and systematic basis, with updates being made if the needs of Synchronised Swimming and Coaching Assistants change.

We hope you enjoy the experience

The ASA Coaching Development team

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**About the certificate**

Certificate title	ASA Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching)
Time	30 hours
Registration period	12 months
Operational start date	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2017

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**Publication**

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### **Outline of the certificate**

The ASA Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching) certificate is a practical certificate, which develops the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to be a Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching). The delivery of the certificate is flexible with the training organisation able to choose the timing and methods of delivery. The assessment of the certificate is prescribed.

All aspects of the certificate are compulsory. The certificate must be delivered and assessed in English. This certificate is made up of a series of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Assessment is through the completion of a series of tasks set by the ASA. The accuracy of the assessment is verified using ASA quality assurance procedures.

### **Learner entry requirements**

There are no formal entry requirements for this certificate and learners are not required to have any prior experience of teaching.

Learners must be at least 16 years of age at the point of registration of this certificate.

### **Safeguarding**

Learners under the age of 18 are able to register on this certificate so training organisations and all staff must be aware of safeguarding policies and procedures ensuring these are fully implemented. For further information please refer to [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015](#) and any subsequent additions.

## **Learning programme and delivery**

The ASA Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching) certificate is approximately 30 hours. If a learner has significant experience in relevant aspects of the certificate then these hours may be less and again there may be learners who require more time. This should be determined by the training organisation prior to the start of the course.

Training organisations are responsible for the recruitment of learners and they must ensure that appropriate information and advice about the certificate is offered so that the learner has realistic expectations and is likely to achieve.

It is recommended that learners complete an initial assessment prior to starting their learning programme. This ensures that any prior learning can be recognised, any support needs identified and that the aspirations of the learner are understood.

Some learners may already have the knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve the certificate from their previous experiences. The extent of their knowledge, skills and abilities should be ascertained by the training organisation during enrolment. The learner may progress straight to assessment and does not have to complete a course of learning. It is imperative that the assessment takes place as stated in this specification to ensure accurate certification. This process is known as the recognition of prior learning. The ASA Recognition of Prior Learning Policy must be followed.

Learners should also receive an induction to identify expectations as well as ensure understanding of any safeguarding and health and safety requirements. The learning programme and delivery should ensure learners have the opportunity to practice their delivery skills and put the learning from the programme into practice.

The certificate is designed to prepare the learner for employment. Special attention should be paid to skills such as professional behaviour, appearance and language and tutors should encourage high standards and expectations at all times.

## Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to ensure that effective learning has taken place to give learners the opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

To achieve this certificate:

- All learning outcomes must be achieved
- All assessment criteria must be achieved
- All evidence produced by the learner must be their own, and in English.

Ensuring the authenticity of learner evidence is vital. All work completed for assessment must be the learner's own original work. Learners must sign to declare that the work they have produced for assessment is their own. Assessors should not assess work where learners have not declared authenticity. Assessors should check that the learner work is authentic.

The ASA produces resources to assess the certificate. It is compulsory to use these resources, which are issued by the ASA to the training organisation. Training organisations are able to modify the format of these documents to support learner achievement. However the training organisation must ensure through their own internal verification procedures, the tasks are not changed.

Assessment is made up of a series of component parts

1. Theoretical questions
  - Please note these questions will change during the life of the certificate and be updated using the relevant hyperlink in the certificate specification
2. Observation record
3. Review record

These documents can only be accessed by using the hyperlinks in this certificate specification. This will ensure accuracy of the materials and maintenance of standards over time.

This certificate is not graded. Learners will either meet the requirements and pass or will not meet the requirements and be referred. Where learners do not meet the requirements, they should be supported in developing an individual action plan. In this situation, further assessment opportunities will be provided to allow them to successfully meet the requirements within the registration period.

The ASA is committed to improving access to ASA certificates for learners with disabilities and other difficulties, without compromising assessment. Further details are provided in the Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy for ASA certificates, which can be found on the ASA website.

Training organisations must have a policy for dealing with learners who wish to appeal against their assessment decisions. Appeals may relate to assessment decisions being incorrect or assessment not being conducted fairly. In the first instance, learners should contact the training organisation and follow their published appeals policy. If learners remain dissatisfied with the outcomes, they should contact the ASA directly via the information contained on page 3.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

Learners can be accredited with the certificate through RPL, if the Training Organisation deem them suitable for this route. Evidence of learner coverage of all assessment criteria must be demonstrated by the Training Organisation before certification is made, with evidence of all other quality assurance checks having been made i.e. internal verification.

External verification will also take place if the RPL route is used by the Training Organisation

### **Quality assurance**

The ASA implements a series of quality assurance procedures to ensure that ASA certificates are reliable, valid and fit for purpose. This includes initial centre approval and review, certificate approval, internal and external verification. The following ASA documents provide further information and can be found on the ASA website.

- ASA Internal Verification Guide
- ASA External Verification Guide
- ASA Assessment Guide

All ASA coaching certificates are reviewed annually and any modifications will be communicated through appropriate communication to the training organisation.

### **Resources**

Training organisations are responsible for ensuring learning takes place in a safe and effective environment.

### **Legal requirements**

- Ensuring the learning environment is safe for all learners and that risk assessments are in place and health and safety is responsibly managed
- Ensuring that all aspects of the Data Protection Act are met and that confidentiality is maintained as required
- Ensuring that learners are able to progress in a respectful environment free from bullying and harassment
- Ensuring that all safeguarding requirements are met.

### **Session requirements**

- Synchronised Swimmers will be required
- The Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching) should not be left unsupervised with divers.

### **Pool and Classroom Characteristics**

- The pool and classroom characteristics must be appropriate to offer safe and effective coaching, learning and assessment at the required level.

### **Other**

- There are many available resources to support learning including books, online materials and forums. The training organisation should advise individual learners which resources support their development at that time.

## **Workforce**

In order to deliver, assess and quality assure this certificate, it is important for training organisations to have appropriately experienced and qualified staff. These include tutors, assessors and internal verifiers. The tutor/assessor delivering the ASA Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching) must hold a current ASA tutor licence. The requirements of this can be found <http://www.swimming.org/asaeducators/asa-educator-license-applications-and-renewals/>.

The role of the tutor is to plan and deliver an appropriate learning programme of activities that develops the learners' skills, knowledge and understanding of being an effective Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching). The tutor must allow learners to apply their knowledge through practical application and finally prepare them appropriately for assessment.

The role of the assessor is to assess the learners' performance and to check if the assessment criteria of the certificate have been met. Assessors may only assess learners in their acknowledged area of technical and occupational expertise. Assessed observations of learners assisting coaching sessions must be conducted by the assessor. The same person can be both the tutor and assessor as long as they meet the stated requirements.

The role of the internal verifier is to monitor the validity and reliability of assessment. The internal verifier should also provide support and guidance to assessors. Internal verifiers must have experience of conducting internal quality assurance procedures. Internal Verifiers cannot quality assure their own assessments.

## **Conflict of interest**

All conflicts must be effectively managed by the training organisation, ensuring any direct or indirect conflict is identified with interventions if required. The ASA offer support where needed.

## **Dealing with malpractice**

Training organisations must have a policy for dealing with potential malpractice. Where malpractice is suspected the training organisation malpractice policy must be followed. Further information, support and guidance can be obtained from the ASA.

**Certificate progression**

On completion of this certificate, learners will have achieved the minimum recognised standards of competency to be certificated as a Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching). Learners may wish to progress to the ASA Synchronised Swimming Coach certificate to aid their development.

**Certificate withdrawal**

In the unlikely event that the ASA withdraws this certificate before its intended date of review, six month's notice of withdrawal will be given to training organisations. This will enable all learners to complete their certificate as part of their registration period.

**Equal opportunities**

The ASA fully supports the principles of equal opportunities and is committed to satisfying these principles in all activities and published materials. A copy of our Equality and Diversity Policy is available on the ASA website.

**Credits**

The ASA worked in partnership with key partners during the production of this specification. This included training organisations, employers, current and potential learners, synchronised swimming and educational experts. In particular thanks go to:

Frances Gibbs, Julie Gibson, Jenny Gray, Sarah Green, Sarah Speers, Jenny Stafford-Brown, Simon Stevens, John Vernon and Nigel Wright.

## **ASA Synchronised Swimming Assistant (Coaching) Certificate**

The certificate includes four key sections:

### **Learning outcomes**

Learning outcomes are statements that broadly describe what a learner will know about, understand or be able to do as a result of learning.

### **Assessment criteria**

Assessment criteria are more specific than the learning outcome and details what a learner must do in order to meet these learning outcomes. These criteria have a command verb (listed in the glossary of terms) or a level descriptor that defines the level of difficulty as well as the specific content that the command verb or level descriptor must be applied to.

### **Key learning content**

Key learning content details the specific content that must be taught, learnt and assessed. It must be included in the learner evidence in order to achieve the assessment criteria. It may also include suggestions and examples for inclusion. These examples or suggestions will be clearly stated to ensure clarity.

### **The assessment materials**

The assessment materials are how the learning outcomes, assessment criteria and key learning content will be assessed. These materials are set by the ASA with links to the required documents. These documents must be used. If the training organisation would like to deviate from these as a result of reasonable adjustments or special considerations the ASA Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy must be followed.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	Key Learning Content	Assessment Materials
1. Know about the legal aspects of assisting in synchronised swimming sessions	1. Define <b>legal aspects</b> of assisting in synchronised swimming sessions	<b>Legal aspects:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding, including photography</li> <li>• Health and safety, including use of music equipment</li> <li>• Equality and diversity</li> <li>• Data protection</li> </ul>	Theoretical Questions
2. Know about the responsibilities of a Synchronised Swimming Assistant	1. Identify the <b>responsibilities</b> of a Synchronised Swimming Assistant	<b>Responsibilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To report any safeguarding, health and safety, equality and diversity and data protection concerns to the named responsible person</li> <li>• To work in partnership with the qualified Synchronised Swimming Coach</li> <li>• To work within the ASA recommended coach to athlete ratios</li> <li>• To follow the guidance of the qualified Synchronised Swimming Coach</li> <li>• To look and behave professionally</li> <li>• To follow the ASA good practice guidance and Code of Ethics</li> <li>• </li> </ul>	
3. Know about the role of the Synchronised Swimming Assistant in promoting synchronised swimming	1. Identify the <b>stages of the Athlete Development Support Pathway (ADSP)</b> in Synchronised Swimming	<b>Stages of the Athlete Development Support Pathway</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FUNdamentals</li> <li>• Learning to Train</li> <li>• Training to Train</li> <li>• Training to Compete</li> <li>• Training to Win</li> <li>• Active for Life</li> </ul>	

4. Know about synchronised swimming skills and drills	1. Identify basic positions in synchronised swimming	<b>Basic positions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vertical position</li> <li>• Tuck position</li> <li>• Ballet leg</li> <li>• Tub</li> <li>• Back layout</li> <li>• Front layout</li> <li>• Fishtail</li> <li>• Splits</li> <li>• Surface arch</li> <li>• Pike position</li> </ul>	Theoretical Questions
	2. Identify <b>drills</b> in synchronised swimming	<b>Drills</b> to include practising positions and transitions: On the wall With bottles Using counts With a partner With floats	
	3. Identify a <b>range of elements</b> in synchronised swimming	<b>Range</b> is all the basic elements plus four or more from each Figure Grade Levels 1 and 2 & Routine Grades 1 & 2.  <a href="#">See appendices 1 - 4</a>	

5. Know about scientific principles in synchronised swimming	1. Outline the basic <b>scientific principles</b>	<b>Scientific principles:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buoyancy</li> <li>• Propulsion</li> <li>• Resistance</li> </ul>	Theoretical Questions
6. Know the components of a synchronised swimming session plan	1. Identify the <b>components</b> of a synchronised swimming session plan	<b>Components:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims and objectives</li> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Entry</li> <li>• Warm up</li> <li>• Main activity</li> <li>• Cool down</li> <li>• Conclusion</li> <li>• Dry land</li> <li>• Stretching</li> </ul>	
	2. Describe the <b>purpose</b> of each key component of a synchronised swimming session plan	<b>Purpose:</b> The reason for doing this	

7. Know about synchronised swimming equipment	1. Identify a <b>range</b> of different <b>types of synchronised swimming equipment</b>	<p><b>Range:</b> Two or more items from each type of equipment</p> <p><b>Types of synchronised swimming equipment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching equipment – for example; kick boards, fins, pull buoys, activity cards, session plans, bottles , floats , noodles</li> <li>• Swimmer equipment – for example; hat, goggles, nose clip, training diary, resistance band</li> <li>• Pool rescue equipment – for example; poles, ropes, throw bags, whistles, alarms</li> <li>• Music equipment</li> <li>• Underwater speaker</li> </ul>	Observation Record
8. Be able to demonstrate communication skills in a synchronised swimming session environment	1. Use appropriate <b>verbal</b> and <b>non-verbal communication</b> skills with swimmers and other coaching staff	<p><b>Verbal communication:</b> Volume, tone, language, counting and rhythm</p> <p><b>Non-verbal communication:</b> Gestures, body language, demonstrations</p>	
9. Be able to demonstrate motivational techniques	1. Use appropriate <b>motivational techniques</b> with swimmers	<p><b>Motivational techniques:</b> Praise, positive reinforcement, incentives, positive learning environment</p>	

10. Be able to assist a qualified Synchronised Swimming Coach	1. Carry out the <b>assistive tasks</b> to support a qualified Synchronised Swimming Coach	<b>Assistive tasks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess swimmers readiness to participate</li> <li>• Follow the instructions of a qualified Coach</li> <li>• Deliver planned and agreed warm up and cool down activities within the allocated time</li> <li>• Setting up and down equipment</li> <li>• Give Demonstrations</li> <li>• Deliver planned and agreed basic skill practices within the allocated time</li> <li>• Identify basic faults in skills</li> <li>• Observe and provide swimmers effective feedback and coaching points</li> <li>• Carry out small group behaviour management</li> <li>• Provide session feedback to the qualified Synchronised Swimming Coach</li> <li>• Maintain a safe environment</li> <li>• Follow the ASA good practice guidance and Code of Ethics</li> </ul>	Observation Record
11. Understand the importance of feedback and evaluation	1. Describe the <b>importance of gaining feedback and evaluating</b> assisting synchronised swimming sessions	<b>Importance of gaining feedback and evaluating:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To take into consideration views of swimmers and the qualified Synchronised Swimming Coach</li> <li>• To support future session planning</li> <li>• To support future assisting performance</li> <li>• To support swimmer development</li> <li>• To identify potential training or support needs</li> </ul>	

12. Be able to review own performance	1. Identify <b>strengths</b> and <b>areas for improvement</b> of <b>own performance</b>	<p><b>Strengths:</b> What worked well</p> <p><b>Areas for improvement:</b> What could have gone better</p> <p><b>Own performance:</b> Maintaining a safe environment Communication skills Motivational techniques Giving feedback and coaching points to swimmers Assisting the qualified Synchronised Swimming Coach (or above)</p> <p>Taking into consideration feedback from swimmers and the qualified Synchronised Swimming Coach</p>	Review Record
13. Know about professional development opportunities	1. Identify a <b>range</b> of <b>progression</b> and <b>continual professional development (CPD) opportunities</b>	<p><b>Range:</b> Two or more</p> <p><b>Progression:</b> The next level of course</p> <p><b>CPD opportunities:</b> Observation of qualified coaches, work experience, further training, independent research, mentoring and further progression opportunities including the next level of certificate.</p>	