

# Swim England Coaching Policy 2022 – FAQ's

## Why has Swim England released this policy?

The Teaching and Coaching statement was first released in 2018 giving guidance on recommended qualifications for coaches and teachers delivering activity with clubs. This statement was produced in line with the Swim England insurance guidelines and FAQ's; <https://www.howdengroup.com/uk-en/swim-england/faqs>

The 2022 policy document is aimed specifically towards the expected levels of coach provision for club activity including poolside, dry-land and attendance at competitions.

## Qualifications

### How does my qualification equate to the current requirements?

Please look at the qualification matrix to understand if you have a Level 1 or Level 2 equivalent qualification in teaching or coaching.

### How can I find out if my level of qualification is appropriate?

Please consult the Qualification Matrix.

### I have a Teaching certificate with Unit 4. What does this mean?

The coaching Unit 4 was an additional qualification element that teachers could take to enhance their teaching qualification. Unit 4 was available from 2002 and ceased being delivered in 2007.

Swim England continue to recognise anyone who has previously gained this certificate as an appropriate qualification for club coaching.

### I have an 8-10 CPD as well as my Level 2 Teacher certificate. What does this mean?

The Aquatic Skills Framework stage 8-10 CPD's are related to the Swim England Learn to Swim Framework and are an additional certificate that teachers can obtain to provide them with a knowledge of early years coaching methods to transfer from Learn to Swim into the club environment.

Qualified Level 2 Swimming Teachers with this additional CPD must continue to deliver any sessions within the scope of their qualification.

## Can I gain a qualification through Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)?

We do not offer a RPL route from Assistant Coach (Level 1) to Coach (Level 2). There are several reasons for this; the cost is generally greater than going on a course, it takes a longer time to achieve and greater resource to service. More importantly, our courses are designed to equip a coach with skills and knowledge that supports the progression of an athlete through the English and British system. We therefore believe it is important that coaches do undertake the education programme.

## Leading a session

### Our normal Coach / Level 2 is not able to make the session, can an assistant coach step in on this one occasion?

An assistant coach can cover a session in exceptional circumstances but the club must conduct a risk assessment to determine the level of competency and qualifications for those supervising the session. This should also include safety cover in place for the coach during the session. The assistant coach providing the cover should be comfortable delivering any session written by the lead coach or the session should be adapted accordingly.

This should be used in exceptional circumstances only. Sessions should not be planned with the expectation that only an assistant will be in attendance.

Please read the Swim England insurance FAQ's; <https://www.howdengroup.com/uk-en/swim-england/faqs>

### Can I lead an affiliated club session if I am a Level 2 Teacher?

Yes a Level 2 Teacher may be appropriate to independently lead a club session but must deliver within the scope of your qualification. A level 2 teacher would have the skills and knowledge to deliver sessions based around stroke and skill development.

A teacher would not be an appropriate qualification to cover county level swimming sessions and above. The exception to this would be the delivering of a specific skills session.

### Does our club need a coach if we are an Adult only club?

For non-competitive, adult only clubs that turn up and play / swim socially on a weekly basis, a robust risk assessment should be in place to mitigate the need for a Level 2 coach or teacher leading the session. It is vital that the club assesses the risk posed by this situation and adheres to the safety cover supervision requirement of the venue being used. Failure to do this may mean the club insurance could be invalid.

Clubs or teams who swim / play more than once a week and take part in regular competitions will not be seen as a social activity and therefore the coaching policy requiring a Level 2 coach or teacher on poolside should be adhered to for all sessions.

### Can I coach the session from within the pool?

No, the coach should remain on the poolside at all times when coaching a session. This is to ensure the safety and supervision of all athletes in the session.

## Safety cover and supervision

### What is Safe Supervision?

The Safe Supervision document is designed for all pool users to ensure that safe practice is being delivered. The document contains appropriate levels of supervision that should take place within organised club sessions along with advice and guidance on safety cover and lifeguard provision. A copy of this document can be requested via <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/worker-health-and-safety/>

### Can I coach and provide safety cover / lifeguard at the same time?

It is Swim England's recommendation that no coach leading a session should also provide safety cover if they are coaching on their own however we understand that in certain circumstances this will be agreed with the pool operator. Where a safety supervision role is being undertaken by the Club, this should be clearly detailed within the hire agreement of the pool operator and fully risk assessed by the Club.

Club sessions should be adequately supervised by an appropriately qualified person. Swim England Safe Supervision guidance document should be followed when selecting the level of supervision and personnel that can provide safety cover supervision.

### What is the difference between pool lifeguard and safety cover?

Pool lifeguard-qualified teachers/coaches can be responsible for supervising the swimming pool during unprogrammed and programmed pool sessions. When supervising unprogrammed pool sessions as part of a lesson, an additional risk assessment should be carried out to ensure children are accompanied appropriately.

Pool lifeguard qualified swimming teachers/coaches would hold one of the below qualifications:  
RLSS UK NPLQ;  
STA Pool Lifeguarding;

Where programmed sessions are the only activity in the pool, rescue-qualified teachers/coaches may provide the safety cover for the activity. The operator should conduct a full risk assessment to ensure this is suitable.

Rescue-qualified swimming teachers/coaches would hold one of the below qualifications:  
RLSS UK NRASTC;  
RLSS UK NRASTC Light Award\*;  
STA Safety Award for Teachers.

\*Please note: for those holding RLSS UK NRASTC Light Award, staff qualified as Lifeguards or First Aiders should be available to respond quickly to a Swimming Teacher or Coach in the event of an emergency

## What is an appropriate qualification for safety cover at a club session?

The National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches (NRASTC) is a supervision and rescue award for swimming teachers, coaches and/or instructors working during programmed activities, such as swimming lessons. [NRASTC](#)

The National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches Light (NRASTC Light) is a supervision and rescue award for swimming teachers, coaches and/or instructors working during programmed activities, such as swimming lessons; when Lifeguard or First Aid backup is available to respond quickly in the event of an emergency. [NRASTC Light](#)

## General

### What is an appropriate land training qualification?

Coaches should only practice what they have received training in. The knowledge of the RMAP warm-up and post pool mobility sessions are gained within the Swim England Swimming Coach and Senior Coach certificates but the skills required to teach and coach land training sessions are not.

It is recommended that swimming coaches that wish to implement a land training regime gain an appropriate land training via one of the following routes:

- REPS training – registered exercise professionals with insurance for people on the register.
- YMCA course.
- NSCA – online learning and examination.

There are many courses available for exercise professionals and personal trainers. Ideally pick the course with practical assessments and exams to ensure competency.

### How can I get support to complete a risk assessment for my club training session?

Swim England provide a template and completed example of a club risk assessment on the SwimMark portal which all clubs can access. Useful links:

Swim England insurance site; <https://www.howdengroup.com/uk-en/swim-england/clubs>

Sport England Club Matters; <https://www.sportenglandclubmatters.com/governance/policies-and-procedures/risk-assessment/>

### Can I attend a competition if I am only a Level 1 qualified coach?

Yes you can attend a competition however your club should risk assess whether the appropriate level of supervision is in place. This should also take into account the supervision ratios within Wavepower and Team Manager training.

A Level 1 / Assistant coach is qualified to support a Level 2 Coach or above and should be able to gain the experience of competition attendance.

If a Level 1 / Assistant coach is planning to attend a competition without a Level 2 Coach present the club must perform a risk assessment to determine the appropriate level of

supervision and safety is in place for the club members. Any coach should not also be performing the role of Team Manager whilst attending a competition.

Swim England expect that a minimum Level 2 Coach is the lead coach for any club attending a National event.