GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of
Education

APPENDIX S: SWIMMING AND WATER BASED ACTIVITIES

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SWIMMING AND WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES

This document contains specific requirements related to Swimming and Water-Based Activities and must be read in conjunction with *Appendix A: General Requirements* in the *Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures.*

1. BACKGROUND

Students participate in many aquatic activities that are part of teaching and learning programs. Any recreation and/or outdoor education activity that is planned in or around water must meet mandated requirements. These procedures provide activity-specific requirements for the following:

- *Swimming and Water-based Activities*
- *Paddling*
- *Powerboating*
- *Sailing and Sailboarding*
- *Scuba Diving*
- *Snorkelling*
- *Surf Riding.*

Less formal activities planned in and/or around water (that are not listed), may be classified as water-based activities and therefore must meet the mandated requirements of this document.

DEFINITIONS

ASSISTANT SUPERVISOR
Assists the Qualified Supervisor and or Department Teacher-in-charge. Must have required qualifications, along with recent and relevant experience in the activity at the level being offered to the students.

CALM WATER
A still or slow moving water environment with no to low swell, within **400 meters** of a safe landing point. These areas may include a sheltered/ protected coastal area or river, dam, waterhole or inland water body.

DEPARTMENT TEACHER-IN-CHARGE
The member of the teaching staff employed by the Department of Education (or an Approved Provider) and is managing the school activity. For information relating to Approved Providers refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements.*

FREE SWIM
An informal, recreational swim with no educational purpose. Normally as a celebration following a structured activity, such as a swimming carnival or excursion. Recreational or 'free' swims present a higher risk.

OPEN WATER
An unprotected water environment that may be fast flowing or turbulent, such as a surf beach, flowing river or waterway, tidal coastal water, or areas affected by swell and or/strong currents. This also applies to calm water areas greater than **400 meters** from a safe landing point.

Note: Ocean Pools and Wave Pools may be classified as Calm Water or Open Water depending on environmental conditions. Appropriate risk assessment of the environment must be conducted to confirm adequate supervision levels and qualification requirements are maintained.

SWIMMING CARNIVAL
School swimming events may include traditional swimming competitions, activities or novelty events at swimming pools, lakes or beaches.

SWIMMING POOL
A controlled, indoor or outdoor, still water environment contained within an artificial structure, monitored for water quality.

WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES
Less formal activities occurring in and around water. Examples include team development, games and raft building.

WATER SAFETY PROGRAMS
Formal programs focusing on water safety awareness, stroke correction, fitness training and/or the preparation of students for competition in aquatic sports, such as competitive swimming, triathlons, water polo and/or lifesaving activities.

This document provides mandated requirements for planning and conducting:
- Swimming and Water Safety Programs (including Surf Lifesaving lessons)
- Swimming Carnivals
- Water-Based activities (including free swims).

Guidance
Royal Life Saving and Surf Life Saving provide specific information and fact sheets pertinent to water safety.

The Department's Swimming and Water Safety branch is responsible for the coordination of the VacSwim and Interm swimming programs. The information in these procedures does not apply to these programs.

2. ENVIRONMENT

Aquatic environments vary and their suitability must be considered when planning the activity. Each environment is unique, and open/unprotected water environments can be more hazardous than calm/protected water environments.

The Qualified Supervisor must have first-hand knowledge of the venue, weather conditions, tides and currents at that venue (see *Appendix A: General Requirements*). Research and/or a reconnaissance trip must be conducted around desired locations well in advance to confirm sites are suitable.

The Department Teacher-in-charge confirms the suitability of the venue after considering the:
- Location and planned activities
- strength of tides and currents
- presence, power and height of waves and swell
- water turbidity and temperature
- the age, capacity and skills of each student and supervision required
- qualifications and experience of the supervisor
- submerged objects and water depth variations
- possibility of members of the public or other groups in the same area.

Selected activity areas must be clearly defined (for example, by using as relevant on-shore markers, flags or natural features, off-shore buoys and/or anchored markers such as coloured plastic bottles).

A waiting area, out of the water, must be clearly defined and students must be supervised at all times.

At all aquatic locations, signage must be adhered to (particularly in relation to diving).

Weather conditions can change rapidly and must be assessed and monitored in the days leading up to the activity, on the day of the activity and throughout the activity. In particular, any swells or rips should be noted, and students instructed on how to safely negotiate out of a rip if necessary. The supervisory team may need to modify, relocate or cancel the activity at any time. Check the *Bureau of Meteorology* for up-to-date conditions and weather warnings.

Swimming activities must not be conducted where a river is in flood, or in known estuarine crocodile habitats. Further information is available from *The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions* or *Be Crocwise*.

Checks must be made directly prior to the activity regarding shark sightings or alerts in the area of use. In the event of a shark sighting the activity may need to be postponed, modified. Prior to conducting the activity, the Department Teacher-in-charge must access information regarding coastal conditions and shark activity. Information is available from:

- *SharkSmart* website
- *Surf Life Saving WA (SLSWA)* website or
- SLSWA *X Twitter feed*.
- Beachsafe.

The activity must be cancelled immediately, and students/staff removed from the water if a shark warning alert is sounded or becomes current.

Calm water environments and swimming pools
A minimum depth of **900mm** is recommended where tumble turns are expected to be performed and turn indicators in place (for example, flagged ropes must be used when backstroke is being performed).

Flagged ropes shall be suspended across the pool, **1.8 metres** above the water surface, from fixed standards placed **5.0 metres** from any end where swimmers will turn or finish.

Supporting poles should not obstruct the concourse.

False start ropes, when used, are suspended across the pool not less than **1.2 metres** above the water level from fixed standards placed **15.0 metres** in front of the starting end.

Lane ropes must not have sharp edges or fittings that could entrap fingers and must be inspected regularly.

Guidance
World Aquatics (formally The Federation Internationale De Natation) Open Water Swimming Manual provides information to create the best possible environment for competitive use and training.

Open water environments
The swimming area must be defined by recognisable boundaries such as a bank, shorelines, flags, piers or floating ropes.

Temperature, water turbidity and the presence of submerged objects must be checked before commencing the activity.

The length of shoreline defined for use in these venues must not exceed **100 metres**.

Beach programs should be conducted at patrolled beaches wherever possible.

Swimming programs are not to be conducted if the water temperature is low and/or there is a risk of hypothermia.

Guidance
Potential dangers in aquatic environments may include: shallow water blackout, drowning, impact injuries from dumping waves or from diving into shallow water, cuts and abrasions from rocks or snags, sunburn, hypothermia, marine stings, objects in water acting as strainers, and the presence of marine craft.

It is recommended for calm and open water locations, board or ski riders should be engaged to provide additional water safety to students.

3. CAPACITY OF STUDENTS

Prior to commencing the activity, the Department Teacher-in-charge must determine whether each student has the capacity and required swimming and water safety skills to participate safely.

Students with a disability or impairment, who may not be able to swim or or who have had limited exposure to water, may participate in swimming and water-based activities provided adequate safety and support strategies are implemented. Specific consideration is given to:

- the impact of the student's ability to safely participate in the activity
- location and access
- supervision levels
- suitable flotation devices and/or support craft
- providing curriculum adjustments so the student can access the activity on the same basis as their peers
- on-shore assistance and supervision.

Alternative, modified or adjusted activities must be provided for students who do not have the capacity to participate.

The Department Teacher-in-charge must be aware of health care maintenance and/or any intensive health care needs of students, particularly allergic reactions to stings or bites in a marine environment. Protective equipment such as gloves and appropriate exposure suits should be considered for students who are susceptible.

Students who have a medically diagnosed condition that may impact on their safety must be cleared by a medical practitioner before they can participate.

A re-assessment of students' capacity is undertaken if any circumstances surrounding the activity change. This includes any change in the condition of the aquatic environment, their medical fitness, or their capacity to undertake the activity.

Guidance
Swimming
The Department's Swimming and Water Safety Continuum and the Safety Survival Sequence (refer to Swimming and Water Safety Activities document) within the Swimming Instructors Handbook and Guidelines and Royal Life Saving Swim and Survive Instructor Assessment Guide are useful resources for gauging students' swimming and water safety skills. They are only indicative of student skills at the time of assessment and their use does not guarantee students' safety, nor reduce a teacher's duty of care responsibilities.

***Guidance for teaching safe water entry and diving for beginners**:*
The teaching of safe water entries and diving should must be taught progressively in the following sequence:

- *In water push and glide from standing position*
- *Pool side, seated*
- *Pool side, standing crouched*
- *Poolside, standing*
- *Starting block*

Reference: Royal Life Saving Society, Australia (WA Branch).

*Skills students require to participate safely in **all water** environments may include:*
- *diving or jumping, including safety jumping, from various heights*
- *swimming under water*
- *swimming in turbulent water*
- *catching waves*
- *entering and exiting the water.*

*Students should demonstrate the following skills and understandings prior to, and/or whilst participating in, **open water** activities or programs:*
- *swim continuously for 200m and, immediately following, tread water for one minute.*
- *recognition of rips and currents, wave types and breaks and how to safely negotiate out of a rip*
- *dangerous marine animals and treatment of stings/bites*
- *self-rescue in surf conditions*
- *familiarity with buddy practices*
- *surf etiquette and rules*
- *recognition of hand signals.*

4. STUDENT HEALTH CARE

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements* for further requirements.

5. ACTIVITIES

The Department Teacher-in-charge must ensure that the full range of activities for the proposed swimming or water-based activities program is assessed to inform planning and selection of appropriate water-environments. On the day of the activity, the supervisory team must assess conditions at the location as being suitable for participating students.

Buddy practices and lost buddy procedures are used wherever practical.

Diving

For crouching and standing dives, it is preferable to have a depth of **2.0 metres**. Diving must not be taught in shallow water (for example, water that is less than **1.5 metres** deep). It is recognised that some pools may not provide appropriate water depths. If the preferred minimum water depth is not available, a risk assessment must be conducted, recorded and all supervisors informed of its findings and recommendations.

Flat racing dives should be taught from the side of a swimming pool in deep water before allowing a dive entry into more shallow water, or from a starting block.

Springboard/Platform Diving

Where diving is to be performed, consideration must be given to each student's diving competence and the depth of the water. Diving must not be taught in shallow water. Diving classes must be segregated from swimming areas.

Guidance
Supervisors should be aware that the following activities present a greater risk:
- *the use of diving towers and springboards'*
- *interactive, floating play equipment and inflatables. These items should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and any relevant CEO Instructions.*

If diving activities are planned, the NSW Department of Education and Training Safe Water Entry for Competitions provides information about diving for students, as well as a diving depth matrix that helps supervisors determine the relevant depth of water required for various diving activities.

Refer to the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries for Pool Depth Guidelines.

Beach activities

A pre-start safety check must include the identification of rips. A review of how to safely negotiate out of the rip must be conducted with students.

When planning activities that include free swims, the Department Teacher-in-charge must ensure that the capacity of the students is suitable to the selected aquatic environment and risk-managed accordingly (refer to *Appendix B: Risk Management Plan*).

6. EQUIPMENT

The Department Teacher-in-charge must confirm that equipment to be used for the activity conforms to the relevant Australian Standard, is appropriate to the activity, safe and in good working order (for example, swimming and rescue equipment, swimming pool lane ropes).

Emergency rescue equipment will vary according to the aquatic activity. The following equipment should be considered, with the most appropriate selected for the venue and made available:

- reaching aids
- throw rope
- personal flotation device
- spinal board
- a whistle
- surfboard
- rescue tubes and boards
- access to board riders
- a life-saving ring
- wave skis
- body boards
- swim fins.

Rescue equipment must be readily accessible at each teaching station and/or at other places where students are swimming or diving.

Appropriate first aid equipment must be readily accessible. The first aid kit must contain items appropriate for the specific water-based activity, the location, size and needs of the group, and the duration of the activity.

In case of emergency, appropriate communication equipment must be readily available. Mobile phones must be available for use in an emergency situation (with allowance made for the fact that they do not operate in all localities). Where there is no mobile phone coverage, MHz, MF/HF or VHF radios should be used (27- MHz radios are being phased out and will no longer be compliant from 1 September 2028). A satellite phone is an alternative option. Consideration should be given to carrying an EPIRB and the viability of participating in water-based activities in locations where access to emergencies services and communication is limited.

Students should be protected from excessive exposure to the sun to minimise the risk of sunburn (for example, using hats, protective clothing, sunblock and sun glasses).

The use of goggles and/or swimming caps (especially for students with long hair) is recommended.

Appropriate footwear (for example, watershoes) should be worn when swimming in water where visibility is limited and the bottom surface is unknown.

Guidance
A broad-spectrum, water-based sunscreen should be applied as per the manufacturer's instructions.Students who own sunglasses should be encouraged to bring and wear them. Drinking water should be available at all times.

7. THE SUPERVISORY TEAM

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements* for further requirements.

8. EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

The Department Teacher-in-charge must ensure that when booking an external provider, they are made aware of the documentation that they need to provide, or that must be sighted.

External providers must follow all mandated requirements in the Recreation and Outdoor Education Activities for Public Schools Procedures will be asked to supply copies of certain documentation, and/or make them available for the Department Teacher-in-charge to sight. External providers should familiarise themselves with *Appendix A: General Requirements* and *Appendix D: External Provider Checklist*.

9. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

The Department Teacher-in-charge must confirm that supervisory team members possess the skills required for aquatic activities, and have the appropriate experience to identify and manage potential risks in the appropriate water environment.

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements* for mandated:

- first aid qualifications
- evidence requirements for qualifications and competencies.

Rescue and CPR requirements

The Department Teacher-in-charge must confirm that the supervisory team:

- has recent and relevant experience in the activity at the level being offered to students
- recent and relevant experienceed in instruction of the desired aquatic program, and providing emergency rescue
- has the relevant qualifications, including current CPR qualifications
- understands the emergency responses and supervision responsibilities.

All supervisors must, as a minimum, be able to swim twice the length of the area they are supervising and be able to affect a rescue.

Recommended minimum qualifications and/or formal training requirements

Recognised qualifications are specific to different aquatic environments.

At least one member of the supervisory team must hold a current, activity-specific qualification and/or have attained current, activity-specific competencies through a recognised tertiary institution or Registered Training Organisation recognised by the Department, including:

Swimming Pools and Calm water	Must have at least ONE of the following: • AUSTSWIM *Teacher of Swimming and Water Safety* certificate (for swimming pools only) • ASCTA Swim Australia Teacher (SAT) qualification (for swimming pools only) • *Bronze (or higher)* award relevant to the specific activity under the *National Coaching Accreditation Scheme* • Royal Life Saving Society Australia (RLSSA) *Swimming Instructor* certificate (for swimming pools only) • RLSSA *School Teacher Aquatic Rescue Training* START certificate (for closed and open water locations) • RLSSA *Aquatic Rescue* qualification • Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) *Surf Rescue* certificate • Surf Life Saving Western Australia (SLSWA) *Community Surf Rescue* certificate • RLSSA *Bronze Medallion* qualification or equivalent • RLSSA *Pool Lifeguard* certificate (swimming pools only) • Australian *White Water Rescue Training* certificate (for non-surf environments, such as a lake exposed to wind or waves) • an equivalent award, as recognised by the Director General.

Open water	Must have at least ONE of the following: • SLSA *Bronze Medallion* • RLSSA *Bronze Medallion* (not suitable for a surf beach environment where there are waves and currents) • SLSA *Surf Rescue* certificate • SLSWA *Community Surf Rescue* certificate • RLSSA *School Teacher Aquatic Rescue Training* (START) certificate • *White Water Rescue Training* certificate (for non-surf environments, such as a lake exposed to wind or waves) • *Bronze (or higher)* award relevant to the specific activity under the *National Coaching Accreditation Scheme* • an equivalent award, as recognised by the Director General.

Guidance
Records of qualifications
A record of staff swimming and water safety qualifications should be maintained by the school. The date of issue of the qualification and formal notification of any subsequent renewal or upgrade should be included.

It is recommended that supervisors maintain evidence of their currency and experience through the use of a logbook, or similar.

10. MINIMUM LEVELS OF SUPERVISION

The Department Teacher-in-charge must confirm that the supervisory team members possess skills in the relevant water-based activities and have the appropriate recent and relevant experience and knowledgeto identify and manage potential risks at any stage during the water-based activities.

Supervisory requirements must take into consideration the:
- age, experience and capacity of each student
- students' medical conditions, disability or impairment
- supervisors' competence and experience
- type of activity to be undertaken
- location of the activity and nature of the environment (for example, a swimming pool, calm or open water location)
- supervision of students not participating
- *Surf Life Saving WA Twitter feed* of surf locations and shark sightings
- weather conditions, which must to be assessed and monitored in the days leading up to the activity, on the day of the activity, and throughout the activity. The supervisory team may need to modify, relocate or cancel the activity at any time.

The level of risk in aquatic activities is dynamic and must be constantly monitored. The appropriate number of supervisors directly monitoring students in the water must be maintained at all times.

Greater supervision may be required for less able students due to the nature of the water-based activity, or inherent risks at a particular venue (for example, a wave pool, water slide or surf beach).

A second supervisor is not required for all aquatic environments (Years 7-12), provided that there are clear systems in place for supervisors can quickly summon assistance if required.

Students must be within the Qualified Supervisors line of sight at all times. If the activity goes outside of line of sight, additional supervisors are required to maintain adequate supervision.

The minimum level of supervision is dependent on the number of participants in the water and the aquatic environment in which the activity takes place.

The maximum number of students in the water at one time is based on an assessment of the water and weather conditions, and the impact of these conditions on effective supervision. If there are not enough qualified staff to supervise the number of students in the water, students will need to be rotated in and out of the water, so that safe supervisory requirements can be maintained.

All students not directly involved in swimming and water-based activities must be appropriately supervised.

SWIMMING AND WATER SAFTEY PROGRAMS

Formal Programs, focusing on water safety awareness, stroke correction, fitness training and/or the preparation of students for competition in aquatic sports, such as competitive swimming, triathlons, water polo and/or lifesaving activities.

SWIMMING POOLS

Kindergarten - Year 3
There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every eight students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 4 - 6
There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 32 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof (including the QualifiedSsupervisor).

Year 7 - 12
It is recommended that there are two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 32 students or part thereof.

CALM WATER

Kindergarten - Year 3
There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every six students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 4 - 6
There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every 12 students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 7 - 12
There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 32 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

OPEN WATER

Kindergarten - Year 3
There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every four students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 4 - 6
There must be two supervisors at all times:
- one Qualified Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every eight students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 7 - 12
There must be two supervisors at all times:
- one Qualified Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof*.*

The table below illustrates the minimum supervision requirements for common group sizes. Groups may be larger than those indicated here but must remain within the prescribed supervision ratios and any limits set within this document.

SWIMMING AND WATER SAFETY PROGRAMS

Activity	Year level	Environment	Number of students	Qualified Supervisor	Assistant Supervisor	Total supervisory team
Swimming and water safety programs	K - 3	Swimming Pool	1 - 8	1	1	2
			9 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 24	1	2	3
			25 - 32	2	2	4
		Calm Water	1 - 6	1	1	2
			7 - 12	1	1	2
			13 - 18	1	2	3
			19 - 24	1	3	4
			25 - 30	2	3	5
		Open Water	1 - 4	1	1	2
			5 - 8	1	1	2
			9 - 12	1	2	3
			13 - 16	1	3	4
			17 - 20	2	3	5
	4 - 6	Swimming Pool	1 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 32	1	1	2
			33 - 48	2	1	3
		Calm Water	1 - 12	1	1	2
			13 - 24	1	1	2
			25 - 36	2	1	3
		Open Water	1 - 8	1	1	2
			9 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 24	2	1	3
			25 - 32	2	2	4
	7 - 12	Swimming Pool	1 - 32	1	0	1
			33 - 64	2	0	2
		Calm Water	1 - 32	1	1	2
			33 - 48	2	1	3
		Open Water	1 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 32	2	0	2

SWIMMING CARNIVALS

School swimming events may include traditional swimming competitions, activities or novelty events at swimming pools, lakes or beaches.

SWIMMING POOLS

Kindergarten - Year 3

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every eight students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 4 - 6

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 32 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

There must be two Supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 32 students or part thereof.

CALM WATER

Kindergarten - Year 3

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every six students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 4 - 6

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every 12 students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 32 students or part thereof.

OPEN WATER

Kindergarten - Year 3

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every four students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 4 - 6

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every eight students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof.

The table below illustrates the minimum supervision requirements for common group sizes. Groups may be larger than those indicated here but must remain within the prescribed supervision ratios and any limits set within this document.

SWIMMING CARNIVALS

Activity	Year level	Environment	Number of students	Qualified Supervisor	Assistant Supervisor	Total supervisory team
Swimming carnivals	K - 3	Swimming pool	1 - 8	1	1	2
			9 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 24	1	2	3
			25 - 32	2	2	4
		Calm water	1 - 6	1	1	2
			7 - 12	1	1	2
			13 - 18	1	2	3
			19 - 24	1	3	4
			25 - 30	2	3	5
		Open water	1 - 8	1	1	2
			9 - 12	1	2	3
			13 - 16	1	3	4
			17 - 20	2	3	5
	4 - 6	Swimming pool	1 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 32	1	1	2
			33 - 48	2	1	3
		Calm water	1 - 12	1	1	2
			13 - 24	1	1	2
			25 - 36	2	1	3
		Open water	1 - 8	1	1	2
			9 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 24	2	1	3
			25 - 32	2	2	4
	7 - 12	Swimming pool	1 - 32	1	1	2
			33 - 64	2	0	2
		Calm water	1 - 32	1	1	2
			33 - 64	2	0	2
		Open water	1 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 32	2	0	2

WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES (including Free Swims)

Less formal activities occurring in and around water. Free Swims are recreational swims with no educational purpose. Normally as a celebration following a structured activity, such as a swimming carnival or excursion. Recreational or 'free' swims present a higher risk.

SWIMMING POOLS

Kindergarten - Year 3

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every six students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 4 - 6

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 32 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every 8 students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 32 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

CALM WATER

Kindergarten - Year 3

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every six students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 4 - 6

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every eight students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 7 - 12

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 24 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every 12 students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

OPEN WATER

Kindergarten - Year 3

This activity is not recommended for students in Years K - 3.

Year 4 - 6

This activity is only to be conducted in a fixed location with clearly defined boundaries over no greater distance than **50metres**.

There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every six students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

Year 7 - 12
There must be two supervisors at all times:

- one Qualified Supervisor for every 16 students or part thereof and
- one Assistant Supervisor for every eight students or part thereof (including the Qualified Supervisor).

The table below illustrates the minimum supervision requirements for common group sizes. Groups may be larger than those indicated here but must remain within the prescribed supervision ratios and any limits set within this document.

WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES (including Free Swims)

Activity	Year Level	Environment	Number of students	Qualified Supervisor	Experienced assistant supervisor	Total supervisory team
Water-based activities (including free swims)	K - 3	Swimming pool	1 - 6	1	1	2
			7 - 12	1	1	2
			13 - 18	1	2	3
			19 - 24	1	3	4
			25 - 30	2	3	5
		Calm water	1 - 12	1	1	2
			13 - 16	1	2	3
			17 - 18	2	1	3
			19 - 24	2	2	4
			25 - 30	2	3	5
		Open water	Not recommended			
	4 - 6	Swimming pool	1 - 8	1	1	2
			9 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 24	1	2	3
			25 - 32	1	3	4
			33 - 40	2	3	5
		Calm water	1 - 8	1	1	2
			9 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 24	1	2	3
			25 - 32	2	2	4
		Open water	1 - 12	1	1	2
			13 - 16	1	2	3
			17 - 18	2	1	3
			19 - 24	2	2	4
			25 - 30	2	3	5
	7 - 12	Swimming pool	1 - 32	1	1	2
			33 - 48	2	1	3
		Calm water	1 - 24	1	1	2
			25 - 36	2	1	3
		Open water	1 - 16	1	1	2
			17 - 24	2	1	3

Guidance
The Department's Swimming and Water Safety Continuum and the Safety Survival Sequence (refer to Swimming and Water Safety Activities document) within the Swimming Instructors Handbook and Guidelines and Royal Life Saving Swim and Survive Instructor Assessment Guide are useful resources for gauging students' swimming and water safety skills. They are only indicative of student skills at the time of assessment and their use does not guarantee students' safety, nor reduce a teacher's duty of care responsibilities.

11. SUPERVISION STRATEGIES

Supervision strategies must be confirmed by the Department Teacher-in-charge to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students is maintained at all times and must:

- reflect risks associated with proximity to water
- address circumstances when students are not in clear view of the supervisors
- include those students not actively participating in the activity
- include head counts at regular intervals.

The appropriate number of supervisors directly monitoring the students in water must be maintained at all times.

If other schools or groups are using the same venue, potential risks must be identified, and supervisory strategies put in place to deal with the nature and number of those groups, and any risks that might arise from that situation.

Life guards on duty at pools and beaches may be considered a qualified adult supervisor and part of the supervisory team only if they do not have general lifeguard duties at the venue at that time, and if their sole responsibility during the activity is for the students undertaking the activity.

At some pool venues, schools may be able to pay for life guard support (for example, the venue might designate a lifeguard to a particular event such as a swimming carnival if numbers warrant this action). Alternatively, and depending on participant numbers, the venue might consider opening only for that event. These various arrangements would need to be negotiated on an individual basis with the venue manager.

Supervisors must be appropriately attired and equipped to effect a rescue during the activity. Students are not to enter the water until instructed to do so.

Avoid lengthy, tiring training sessions and continuously monitor students for signs of fatigue exhaustion and hypothermia.

Confirm that if flotation aids are used, they are checked for correct fit.

Restrict underwater swimming to short-duration activities under close supervision. Be aware and supervise for symptoms of underwater blackout.

The supervisory team must ensure that recreational equipment such as inflatable devices and slides are used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Supervision of the activity must:

- maintain clear line of sight of the students throughout interaction with the device
- address potential entrapment risks associated with the device
- include students waiting to enter the water and/or device
- ensure that students exit the device and water safely.

Diving

Where diving occurs, confirm that:

- only one person is on the diving board at any one time
- no one moves across the diver's line of vision during backwards facing dives
- cross-swimming under the diving board is prohibited.

Additional supervision strategies must be put in place for:

- circumstances where all students are not in the water
- students with a disability or impairment, or who have had limited exposure to water-based activities.

Consideration is given to supervisor positioning, scanning and safety check systems.

Guidance
Swimming carnivals
Consideration should be given to the movement of students from one area to another (for example, from house/faction bays to the marshalling area).
It is recommended that a roster is developed to relieve and rotate supervisors. From time to time, a supervisor may need to leave his or her position. In such a situation, the supervisor should alert other supervisors on duty of his/her impending absence in order to confirm that the appropriate number of supervisors directly monitoring students in the water is maintained at all times.

Positioning
After taking into account environmental conditions such as wind and sun the supervisor should adopt a position that:
- *is in a position to maintain supervision of the surface and the bottom (if visible) of the aquatic environment*
- *is in a position to have timely access to appropriate rescue, safety and first aid equipment and*
- *is in close proximity to effectively scan all participants within the area or their zone (if more than one supervisor) and effectively reach a participant in distress within a short time period.*

Scanning
All supervisors should:
- *be positioned in a location that has clear, unobstructed sight lines*
- *take steps to compensate for any difficulties with sight lines (for example, distance from students, effect of reflection/glare or their ability to see below the surface of the water) by changing position or using sunglasses*
- *be alert to signs of potential trouble and/or behaviours of those in need of help.*

Safety check systems
One or more of the following safety check systems can be used:
- *Buddy and check-in systems.*
- *At a pre-arranged signal, buddies hold hands or move closer together and remain in place.*
- *Supervisors confirm that each pair of buddies is safe and that each individual is looking out for his or her partner.*

Water checks
The following water check systems can be used:
- *The supervisor signals for all swimmers (or a particular group) to leave the water.*
- *Head counts and supervisor rotations occur at the same time.*
- *Water checks can be incorporated into a structured educational activity or a planned break.*

Best practice supervisory strategies include at least one of the supervisory team who remains out of the water and is both prepared and capable of effecting a rescue if required.

12. IDENTIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Students and supervisors must be easily identifiable. A system of identification is determined by the Department Teacher-in-charge after assessing the aquatic environment, students' swimming and water safety skills, the type of activities to be undertaken, and the number of students. Staff and students should wear a highly visible rash vest or easily identifiable item.

Guidance
Systems for identifying students may include:
- *the wearing of lifesaver or swimming caps, neoprene armbands, rash shirts, school t shirts, vests, bibs, sashes and*
- *confining students to designated areas not being utilised by other schools or members of the public.*

Each identification system may be used in combination with others.

13. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Refer to *Appendix* A: *General Requirements* for further requirements.

14. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements* and *Appendix B: Risk Management Plan* for further requirements.

15. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements* and *Appendix C: Emergency Management Planning* for further requirements.

16. BRIEFING STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

The Department Teacher-in-charge must confirm that all participants are briefed about:

- the educational purpose (learning intentions) and the cooperative nature of the activity
- components of the activity (including skills required)
- standards of behaviour, including roles and responsibilities
- hazard identification and safety requirements
- buddy practices and procedures that will be followed if members of the party become lost or separated from the group
- boundaries marked for the activity
- communication signals to gain attention and request assistance
- emergency and evacuation procedures, signals and location of emergency equipment
- how to identify currents, rips, reefs and other potential hazards of the venue, including safe entry and exit points
- minimal impact principles for that location *(*see *Leave No Trace* principles*).*

In addition to the above, the Department Teacher-in-charge must confirm that the supervisory team have been briefed about the following:

- the role and location of supervisors
- maintaining supervision ratios (including of those students not involved in the activity)
- modified/adjusted activity requirements for students with a disability or impairment
- the system for identifying students and supervisors
- the route to be followed including pre-determined stops and/or meeting points along the way (if applicable)
- student-specific medical requirements
- conditions associated with hypothermia, sunburn and dehydration
- communication strategies that will be used throughout the activity, including designated signals to gain the attention of the whole group, and to identify when emergency assistance is required
- location of first aid kit and emergency/rescue equipment
- appropriate clothing for the activity and weather conditions, including thermal and sun protection
- aspects of the environment and expected weather conditions.

Special briefing sessions must be arranged for students who were absent from preparatory briefings.

Recreational or free swims

Before participating in a recreational or free swims, students are briefed about safety rules (for example, defined boundaries, communication signals, no acrobatics, no jumping into water etc.).

Guidance
Supervisors should be aware of the phenomenon of hypoxic blackout, also known as "shallow-water blackout" during water-based activities, particularly during 'free swims' (these can occur when there is excessive hyperventilation followed by holding of breath when diving or descending into water, making it possible to lose consciousness). Refer to Royal Life Saving Australia for additional information.

17. INFORMED CONSENT

Refer to *Appendix A: General Requirements* for further requirements.

APPENDIX 1: SWIMMING AND WATER SAFETY CONTINUUM

The *Swimming Instructors Handbook and Guidelines* *contains a coloured version of this page.*

S1	S2	S3
1. Enter water safely Shallow, safe exit **2. Exhale in water** Face in **3. Open eyes under water** Identify an object **4. Submerge** Waist deep **5. Glide forward and recover** Waist deep (minimum) **6. Float or glide backward and recover** Waist deep flotation aid acceptable	**7. Glide forward and kick 3m** Horizontal body position, face in **8. Glide backward, kick and recover** No set distance **9. Swim 5m freestyle** Face submerged **10. Scull/tread water** Basic hand and leg action, chest deep	**11. Swim 10m freestyle** Breathing **12. Glide backward and kick 5m** Arms by side **13. Demonstrate breaststroke leg action** On back with board **14. Demonstrate survival sculling** On back **15. Demonstrate a forward roll** Extension
S4	**S5**	**S6**
16. Swim 15m freestyle Regular breathing **17. Swim 10m backstroke** Catch up acceptable **18. Swim 10m survival backstroke OR** Below water arm recovery **19. Swim 5m breaststroke kick** On front with board **20. Scull head first on back** Without leg action **21. Recover an object** Chest deep **22. Swim in deep water** **(**Only ____ m depth available)	**23. Swim 25m freestyle** Proficient technique **24. Swim 15m backstroke** Alternating arm action **25. Swim 15m survival backstroke OR** Symmetrical leg action **26. Swim 15m breaststroke** Symmetrical leg action **27. Demonstrate a surface dive** Chest deep. Recover an object	**28. Swim continuously 50m freestyle OR** *** 25m freestyle and** *** 25m backstroke, or side-stroke, or backstroke, or breaststroke** Proficient technique **29. Swim 25m backstroke** Proficient technique **30. Swim 25m survival backstroke** Proficient technique **31. Swim 25m breaststroke** Proficient technique **32. Demonstrate a dive entry** Deep water required
S7	**S8**	**S9: Non-contact rescues**
33. Scull feet first on back Sculling hand action **34. Demonstrate eggbeater kick** Water polo kick **35. Swim 150 metres** Proficient technique ○ **25m backstroke** ○ **50m breaststroke** ○ **50m freestyle** ○ **25m survival backstroke**	**36. Swim 25m sidestroke** Scissor kick required **37. Demonstrate dolphin kick** Extension **38. Swim 200 metres** Proficient technique ○ **50m backstroke** ○ **50m breaststroke** ○ **50m freestyle** ○ **25m survival backstroke** ○ **25m sidestroke**	**39.** Swim 10m butterfly Extension **40. Demonstrate a tumble turn** Extension **41. Swim 300 metres** Proficient technique ○ **50m freestyle (or 25m butterfly and 25m freestyle)** ○ **50m backstroke** ○ **50m breaststroke** ○ **50m freestyle** ○ **50m sidestroke** ○ **50m survival backstroke** **42. Basic principles of resuscitation (as an extension)**

***Please Note: ADULT SUPERVISION IS ALWAYS NECESSARY**

It cannot be assumed that all skills will be repeated under different conditions. The information within this continuum is only indicative of students' skills at the time of assessment. It does not guarantee students' safety; nor does it reduce teachers' duty of care.

APPENDIX 2: SAFETY SURVIVAL SEQUENCES

The following safety and survival skills are taught at the appropriate stage to further develop students' understandings of water safety and personal survival.

Please note that skills that have been previously taught are not necessarily re-listed.

S1	S2	S3
• Confident entry into and exit from the water. • Float for 10-15 seconds with a flotation aid.	• Glide forward and recover to a standing position. • Float for 30 seconds with a flotation aid. • Be pulled to safety.	• Glide and swim 10m, recover to upright position. • Support body in an upright position and signal distress.
S4	**S5**	**S6**
• Swim and survival scull for 60 seconds. • Grasp an object and be pulled to safety.	• Step in entry. • Scull for 60 seconds using combination of survival sculling and horizontal sculling keeping the face above water. • Grasp a flotation aid thrown for support and swim for 60 seconds. • Be pulled to safety by a partner.	• Dive entry into deep water. • Rotation of the tucked body, keeping the face above the water. • Swim slowly for three minutes, using two recognised survival strokes. • Grasp an aid thrown for support and kick to safety.
S7	**S8**	**S9**
• Enter water using a compact jump. • Swim slowly for four minutes using two recognised survival strokes.	Dressed in swimwear, shorts and t-shirt, demonstrate: • Two minutes survival sculling, floating or treading water, then; • Three minutes swimming slowly, using three recognised survival strokes, keeping the arms below the surface, changing each minute.	Non-contact rescues: • Assistance in shallow water. • Defensive position and reverse. • Delivery of flotation aid in deeper water.

Please Note*:* It cannot be assumed that all skills will be repeated under different conditions.

ADULT SUPERVISION IS ALWAYS NECESSARY