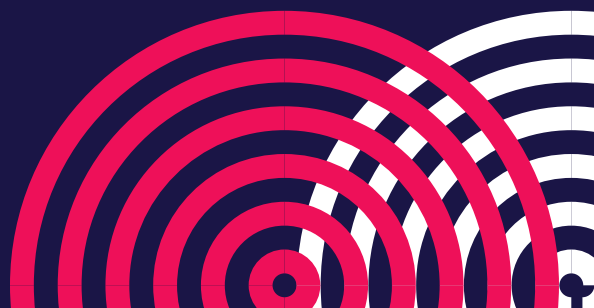




Scottish
Swimming



Club Poolside Helper Artistic Swimming Information Handbook



Course Outline

This aim of this Certificate is to provide you with the knowledge, skills and understanding to assist on poolside in your chosen aquatic / artistic swimming club.

The course will be practical based learning and will take place within your home club environment with support to help you develop the knowledge and skills required to support the swimmers and club.

The certificate for this course will be valid for 2 years and will help you progress towards taking your Level 1 aquatics / artistic swimming qualification.

Following this course, you will be able to:

- Assist on poolside and know how to set up and use equipment safely
- Understand the importance of Health & Safety in an aquatic environment
- Communicate with swimmers effectively
- Understand basic rules, skills and techniques of artistic swimming
- Support a qualified coach with the delivery of a session

Roles and Responsibilities of Club Poolside Helper



As a club poolside helper you will be expected to:

- 1. Support pool organisation**
 - a. Organising the swimmers
 - b. Ensuring pool work is carried out safely
 - c. Working with different groups
- 2. Communicate with the swimmers**
 - a. Informing them of information regarding the activities/figures/routines
 - b. Passing on basic technical information
 - c. Answering questions from the swimmers
- 3. Ensure that basic rules are adhered to and that swimmers are following the instructions correctly**
- 4. Record information**
 - a. Taking registers
 - b. Taking notes from sessions / notes about swimmer performance
 - c. Recording figure/routine information

Lane Organisation



There are various aspects that a club poolside helper will support with regards to organisation

1. Organisation

- a. Identifying areas of practice within the pool set up, e.g. deep end for step entries
- b. Ensuring the swimmers have enough space to work in
- c. Organising equipment prior to and during swimming tasks

d. Organising swimmers during land training sessions

2. Session Rules

- a. General swimming organisation / participant behaviour
- b. Grade grouping order
- c. Toilet breaks

Health & Safety



A good club poolside helper always operates in a safe, responsible manner according to guidelines and acceptable standards of good practice.

As a poolside helper, you will need to:

1. Identify potential hazards and risks around your area
2. Identify relevant information on procedures for health, safety and emergencies
3. Check equipment for damage, cleanliness, suitability for age and task
4. Set up and put away equipment safely and effectively
5. Report any problems to the person responsible (in the first instance the coach)

Coaching Aids and Equipment



As a club poolside helper, you will know the different equipment and aids and how to use them correctly:

1. Kickboard
2. Pull buoy
3. Nose clips
4. 5 litre bottles (2 per swimmer)
5. Hand paddles
6. Bands
7. Foam Roller
8. Tennis Ball
9. Goggles
10. Underwater music system

Understanding a session plan and swimming sets



As an Artistic Swimming club poolside helper, you will understand the basics of a lesson plan

1. **Warm-up:** getting swimmers ready for the tasks ahead
2. **Main Theme can include:**
 - Skill set - where swimmers work on part practices
 - Figure set - where swimmers practice grade figures or age group figures
 - Routine sets - where swimmers practice for routines
3. **Contrast:** Usually pattern-based skills, music interpretation, solo, duet, team routines
4. **Cool Down:** usually a short easy swim, to allow the body to cool down and stretch out muscles

Supervising swimmers



As a Club Poolside helper, you will not be solely responsible for the group of swimmers but in conjunction with your coach you will be responsible for supervising and overseeing swimmers. You will also ensure, as part of the organisation, everyone's safety, understanding and general wellbeing.

Principles of movement through the water



There are 3 main principles that affect swimmers movement through the water.

Propulsion – this is the force that swimmers apply to make them move through the water (pulling, pushing, sculling or kicking).

Drag – this is the resistance that water places on swimmers and slows them down – Streamlining will help to reduce this.

Buoyancy / floatation – is dependent on the upward force exerted by the water that supports the body. An individual's buoyancy depends upon the makeup of their body, the % of bone / muscle / fatty tissue.

Responsibility for running a set



As a club poolside helper you will be responsible for instructing the swimmers during the session, as directed by the coach.

To be able to do this you will need to ensure that you:

1. Know the swimmers you are instructing and their ability level
2. Ensure that you understand the skills and the figures the swimmers are undertaking
3. Have all the equipment that is required ready prior to starting the session
4. Have the attention of all the swimmers
5. Check that the swimmers are completing the set correctly
6. Are supported by your coach

Recording Information



As a club poolside helper you will be required to assist your coach in noting information during training sessions.

To be able to do this effectively, you will need to ensure that you are prepared:

- Ensure you have:
 - o Writing materials
 - o Any technical information e.g. Grade information/figure sheets/ books
 - o Clipboard
 - o Stopwatch (if required)
 - o List of all the swimmers' names
- Ensure in advance that you understand what information you are gathering
- Let the coach know if you have missed any information

Basic Techniques of Swimming

As a club poolside helper, you will understand the basics of stroke technique. This will help with understanding the adaptations for Artistic Swimming. There are five key aspects to all strokes:

BLABT – Body Position, Leg Action, Arm Action, Breathing and Timing

1. Body Position

- Butterfly – undulating; shoulder and hip movement.
- Backstroke – slight incline from head to toe, rotates from side to side.
 - o Adaptation - a larger incline from head to toe, very little rotation
- Breaststroke – varies through each stroke cycle.
 - o Adaptation - High lift of head/chest and shoulders out of the water during the stroke
- Frontcrawl – slight incline from head to toe, rotates from side to side.
 - o Adaptation - a larger incline from head to toe, keeping head out of the water

2. Leg Action

- Butterfly – simultaneous; legs together; toes pointed.
- Backstroke – alternating; toes just breaking the surface.
 - o Adaptation - keeping the kick underwater
- Breaststroke – simultaneous on the same horizontal plane; feet turned out during propulsive phase.
- Frontcrawl – alternating; heels just breaking the surface.
 - o Adaptation - keeping feet under the surface

3. Arm Action – There are two main phases Propulsive (underwater) & Recovery (overwater)

- Butterfly – simultaneous; pulling and pushing under body; recovery over the water.
 - o Adaptation - straight arm recovery and mainly straight on propulsive phase, pinky entry and exit
- Backstroke – alternating; 'S' shaped pull; straight arm recovery.
 - o Adaptation - pull around in front of chest; arms forward and together
 - o Adaptation - Push breaststroke, hands push out in front fingertips pointing upwards
 - o Adaptation - Bunny Breaststroke, hands lift and over the water when moving forwards, fingertips entering the water first
- Frontcrawl – alternating; pulling and pushing under body; bent arm recovery, high elbow over the water
 - o Adaptation - arm stays straight on recovery, thumb entry, strong propulsive phase underwater, sometimes involves a sculling action as the arm action can be very slow

4. Breathing

- Butterfly – to the front.
- Backstroke – as and when required.
- Breaststroke – at the end of the arm pull on each stroke.
 - o Adaptation - all the time
- Frontcrawl – to the side.
 - o Adaptation - Head is always up so breathing all the time

5. Timing

- Butterfly – 2 kicks to 1 pull.
- Backstroke – 6 kicks to one arm cycle.
 - o Adaptation - may have a lot more kicks depending on the speed of the arms
- Breaststroke – Pull; Breath; Kick; Glide.
- Frontcrawl – 6 kicks to one arm cycle
 - o Adaptation - may have a lot more kicks depending on the speed of the arms

Stages of Learning



As a club poolside helper, it is essential that you understand that swimmers go through several stages of learning and that it takes time to develop skills, so that they can be repeated effectively.

- Stage 1 (Cognitive) Swimmers will not be able to do the skill, but will learn to understand what is required for them to achieve the result. At this stage there will be a lot of errors.
- Stage 2 (Associative) Swimmers will be able to do the skill sometimes. They will need to repeatedly practice it correctly. They may improve and regress through this stage and will need support and feedback to help improve. As swimmers move through this stage there will progressively be fewer errors.
- Stage 3 (Autonomous) Swimmers will have learnt to do the skill almost automatically without much thought. During this stage, they will need to keep practicing ensuring that they maintain the skills. At this stage there should be minimal errors.

Communication



As a club poolside helper, you will need to use a range of skills to help communicate with swimmers.

The two types of communication are Verbal and Non-Verbal. When communicating with swimmers, you need to ensure that:

1. All swimmers can see you
 2. All swimmers can hear you
 3. You are clear and concise
 4. You use body language and hand signals to support your verbal instructions
 5. You check all swimmers understand the instructions
- Swimmers will also benefit from praise and feedback, make sure that this **POSITIVE and CONSTRUCTIVE**.

Core Aquatic Skills

Core Aquatic Skills are the fundamental skills that underpin both the more complex swimming strokes and the artistic swimming figures. These include aquatic breathing, rotation, streamlining and sculling. Swimmers need to be competent in these fundamental skills to be able to move on within this discipline. Just as the competitive swimmer cannot progress with front crawl unless they can perform aquatic breathing the artistic swimmer will not progress with figures unless they can perform rotation, aquatic breathing and sculling.

Below are some of the core aquatic skills that link directly with this discipline. These will usually be taught to children from the start of a Learn to Swim programme. A swimmer starting artistic swimming with these skills already in place, to a good standard, will be able to perform the basic elements of artistic swimming and make faster progress through the grades and early competitions.

Rotation: Lots of figures involve rotation around the longitudinal and / or the horizontal axes of the body, these appear as spins (rotation of the whole body) or twists (rotation of part of the body).

Submersion and Aquatic Breathing: Being able to hold your breath with the aid of a nose clip (which will alleviate the associated water pressure on the nasal passages) will help a swimmer perform inverted and rotational skills over years of involvement. Being able to know when to breathe out and being able to control the exhalation towards the end of a figure will ensure figures are completed and the aesthetics of the image maintained.

Treading Water: Artistic swimmers perform mostly in deep water so the ability to maintain a vertical position using the eggbeater kick is important especially in routines.

Sculling: Sculling is used in every stroke/skill practice and figure. There are a variety of different sculling techniques that are used including, flat, standard, reverse and support scull. These sculls combined with different body and arm positions are involved in the full range of artistic swimming skills and figures. Artistic swimmers must have very strong sculling skills.

Streamlining: Being able to move underwater quickly to be in the correct position for routines/lifts is important and a good streamlined position helps with these actions. Entering the water after a walk on by means of a dive or step entry also requires this streamlining skill.

Propulsion: Swimmers may do 10+ lengths of a pool during a routine so have to be able to cover the distance quickly, smoothly and be aesthetically pleasing to the eye of a judge. Good basic swimming strokes are also worked on as 'stamina sets' which in addition to improving endurance will also develop the swimmers' technical stroke skills.

Floatation: Lots of figures are completed at the surface of the water in a position where the swimmer would be lying on their back or their front. The swimmer must be able to float well to maintain the correct body position and to complete the figures. Sculling is also used to assist/maintain 'floating' positions.

Basic skills for figures

Swimmers will be required to master a few basic skills to start working on full figures. The basics are:

Front and back layouts: lying on the front or back using flat sculls to maintain a flat body position with no travel forwards or backwards.

Back surface arch position: Swimmers able to bend the lower back, pushing the head back to gain an arch position

Front pike position: Swimmers able to bend forwards / flex the hip to form a 90° angle. This position can be changed to show a closed pike position of 45° or less.

Back layout to bent knee position: from a back layout, bend one knee, keeping toe close to inside of horizontal leg, draw the toe along the leg until the thigh is vertical with the knee above the hip, then reverse the action to return to back layout. This can also be developed onto ballet leg, where after the bent knee action the lower leg is lifted to the vertical, then reverse the action through bent knee and back to back layout.

Hanging vertical: to remain suspended in deep water, inverted with very little sculling. The swimmer should remain steady and at a floating level with only the feet out of the water. This can also be used for practicing positioning for inverted splits, when both legs open on top of the surface, a support scull will be used to maintain height. A fishtail position can also be developed by having one leg vertical, pointing to the ceiling and the other leg with the toe at the surface. Vertical descents can also be developed from this position.

Back tuck somersaults: body tucks backwards and performs a smooth somersault at the surface of the water then opens out to a back layout position. Flat sculling actions are used. Can also be developed to a back tuck position, this is when the back tuck is held in position without completing a full somersault.

Mentoring Feedback 1

Date:

Topics Discussed:

Areas in need of support:

Action Plan:

Mentoring Feedback 2

Date:

Topics Discussed:

Areas in need of support:

Action Plan:

Glossary of Terms

Artistic impression – This is one of the elements of a performance to be judged. It includes judgements about the manner of presentation, the musical interpretation and the choreography and creativity.

Back layout - The swimmer lies on the back / face-up / supine with as much of the front of the body at the surface of the water as possible. The body should be extended with the head, hips and ankles in line.

Back pike position - The legs are together and extended, the body is bent at the hips to create an angle of 45° or less.

Ballet leg - A back layout position with one leg lifted perpendicular to the water surface.

Bent knee back layout - A back layout position with one knee bent so that the thigh is perpendicular to the water surface and the toe is touching the opposite leg.

Bent knee surface arch - A surface arch position with one knee bent so that the thigh of the bent leg is perpendicular to the surface and the toe is touching the opposite horizontal leg.

Bent knee vertical - A vertical position (inverted) where one leg is bent at the knee so that the toe touches the knee or thigh of the opposite leg.

Boost - A quick, headfirst rise from underwater. The aim is to get as much of the body out of the water as possible.

Canoe scull - A type of sculling used in a front layout position. The palms face the bottom of the pool and move towards the midline of the body underneath the chest or stomach on the in-sculls and out to the sides on out-sculls.

Chief judge - Coordinates and organizes all on-site logistics for the judges, including the judges' meeting, which occurs before the start of competition.

Combination routine - Called "combo" for short. An event in which a team of swimmers perform a routine together. Within the routine there are solo, duet and other sized group elements performed. Swimmers not performing in a portion of the routine perform treading water/ eggbeater kick while 'waiting' to join in again and are not allowed to touch the side or bottom of the pool.

Continuous spin - A rapid descending spin in an inverted vertical - rotates a minimum of 720° (i.e. 2 full rotations).

Crane position - A vertical position (inverted) in which one leg is vertical out of the water and the other leg has the hip flexed at 90° so that the leg is extended under the water surface.

Deck work - The choreographed movements performed on the deck in ten seconds or less prior to entering the pool.

lexed, both legs extended and perpendicular to the water surface.

Duet – A routine in which two swimmers perform together.

Dolphin Scull – Back layout position with the arms extended above the head, wrists flexed so that the fingertips point towards the ceiling and figure of eight / side to side sculling is executed. This produces head first travel on the back,

Eggbeater - A method of treading water. The legs kick alternately, with the lower legs rotating in opposite directions and the ankles are dorsi-flexed. The alternating leg action should produce the constant pressure that will support the body, raise the upper body out of the water or contribute to travel.

Figure - A specific series of body positions and actions performed in sequence. Figures require to conform to the technical specifications laid down by FINA. Figures all have a tariff (determined by World Aquatics). Figures, as well as featuring in routines, are performed individually for judging in competitions.

Figure competition - An event in which junior level and younger swimmers perform a chosen group of figures individually in front of panels of judges.

Fishtail position – Similar to the crane position, with the body extended in an inverted vertical, but with the foot of the front leg remaining at the surface of the water (regardless of the height of the hips).

Flamingo position - A ballet leg position with the horizontal leg bent so that the knee is pulled in toward the chest and the shin is parallel to the water surface. The bent knee and horizontal shin should be drawn in far enough so that mid-point of the calf is at the vertical leg.

Front layout - The swimmer lies face-down / prone with as much of the back of the body at the surface as possible. The face may be in or out of the water.

Front pike position - The body, lying on the front, creates a 90° angle by flexing at the hips, while keeping the legs together and fully extended. The back is straight with the head in line.

Front walkover - From a split position, the front leg lifts through a knight position and lowers to a surface arch. The body surfaces to finish in a back layout. For the complete Front Walkover figure, see the rule book.

Gelatine – This is mixed with water and put into swimmers' hair to keep it in place during competitions.

Highlight - A particularly interesting, impressive or special piece of a routine.

Judges - Meet officials in charge of scoring routines. They sit along the sides of the pool in different arrangements depending on the competition.

Judging Panel - A group of judges chosen to score a specific event.

Knight position - An inverted vertical body position with one leg vertical and one leg extended behind the body at the surface, which causes an arch in the lower back. The hips, shoulders and head remain in-line vertically.

Level – The line of the water level on the swimmers body, also known as the water level or water line.

Lift - When one or more swimmers hold or propel another swimmer above / over the surface of the water.

Marks – Scores awarded.

Nose clip - A piece of equipment used to pinch the nostrils closed in order to keep water out of the nose / nasal passages when swimmers are rotating or inverted.

Over-piking - When you get this correction, it means that your pike position is too closed; your body is forward and too close to your legs.

Pattern - Many patterns or formations and many changes of pattern will be seen during a routine.

Pelvic tilt - This is often the recommendation for correcting a 'piked vertical'. Adjusting the pelvic tilt in this case means tipping your pelvis so that your hips curl forward (tuck your 'seat' under and contract the abdominal muscles to bring the pubic bone closer to the tummy button). This should help the curve in the lower back flatten out and reduce the pike.

Penalty – An amount deducted from the score for rule infractions. Different amounts are deducted for different infractions.

Pike Position – From the front layout the body bends at the hips to 90°, the legs remain at the surface.

Platform lift – This is a lift where one swimmer lays out flat at the water surface to create a 'platform' for another to stand on. Other team mates help support the platform using the eggbeater kick.

Pool pattern – This is the pathway around the pool that a routine takes from start to finish.

Pre-deck work - The pre-deck work is the way the swimmers assume the starting position for their deck work. It occurs after finishing the walk-on and before the music start. Sometimes it is elaborate and sometimes just 'striking a pose'.

Propulsion - Any underwater technique (e.g. pulling / sculling) used to move / propel the body through the water.

Referee – The meet official in charge of ensuring that the meet adheres to the rules, enforces any penalties incurred and is the final arbiter of any question or dispute related to the conduct of the meet. The referee also approves the results of the meet.

Reverse scoop scull - A form of sculling used most often when moving between a front layout and a front pike position. With the body starting in a front layout with the face in the water and the arms below the body in front of the face the arms rotate in an alternating action towards the body. Starting with the arms one above the other, the lower arm rolls away from the body and then up and over the other arm

Routine – A selection of strokes, figures, formations, pool patterns etc. which are choreographed into a routine to be performed by the swimmers to music.

Score - A number given by a judge based on their evaluation of the quality of the performance. The scale goes from 0 to 10, in 1/10th increments, with 10 being a perfect score.

Sculling - Hand movements that propel, stabilize, support and balance a swimmer's body.

Solo - An event in which a swimmer performs a routine alone.

Spin - The act of rotating around the vertical axis most commonly in an inverted vertical position.

Split position - One leg is extended forward; the other leg is extended backwards to achieve a 180° angle at the surface. The lower back is arched to increase the possibility of achieving the 180° angle; the submerged hips and head are in vertical alignment.

Standard scull - A type of sculling used most often when the swimmer is in a back layout or variety of ballet leg positions. The hands are by the hips with the wrists extended so that the fingers are pointing upwards. The hands sweep in / out sideways using a figure of 8 sculling action.

Support scull - The type of sculling used most often when the swimmer is inverted and seeking maximum sustained height. Elbows are near the waist, and the forearms are out to the side with the palms facing down performing flat scull.

Surface arch – While on the back the hips to feet remain at the surface of the water while the body is arched back and down. The spine, shoulders and head create as close to a vertical line under the hips as possible.

Synchronisation - Moving in unison with other swimmers and in relation to the music.

Tapping - This is a technique that enables synchronized swimmers to work to a rhythm when underwater and when there is no music available. The "tapper" / coach taps the rhythm using a metal object against a metal surface e.g. the metal handrails to the steps. The sound carries well and can be heard by the swimmers underwater.

Team – 'Team' can refer to the 'group' that are swimming an event in a competition e.g. the team of swimmers that are swimming in the Technical Team Event or the Free Combination Team Event. It can also refer to the 'whole club team' that belong to the club, train together and compete together as a team in competitions.

Technical element - A movement, figure, pattern, or lift required in a technical routine. The technical elements required vary depending on skill level of the performers. Sometimes just called an element.

Technical routine - A solo, duet or team routine that contains required elements that must be performed in a certain order. Elements vary depending on skill level and competition. They are shorter in length than free routines.

Thrust - An explosive movement that begins in a back pike with legs perpendicular to the surface. The swimmer then emerges feet first as quickly as possible, while the body unrolls underneath the legs to a vertical position.

Transitions - The movements that connect strokes, figures and other positions in a routine.

Tuck position - The bent knees are pulled in as close to the chest as possible, heels are as close to buttocks as possible and the head close to knees. Legs are together.

Twist - A rotation on the vertical axis at a sustained height usually performed in a vertical position.

Twist spin - A half twist, followed by a continuous spin.

Vertical position - The swimmer's body is inverted and extended perpendicular to the water surface. The body is aligned vertically from toes/ankles through the hips to the head. The head is underwater, the legs are extended upwards, out of the water.

Walk-on - This part of the deck work of the routine commences when the swimmers walk from the edge of the pool area to the centre of the deck. Usually, it is done in unison with counts and it sometimes has some additional theme-related movement or attitude incorporated.

World Aquatics - The international governing body for aquatic sports, including artistic swimming, swimming, diving, water polo, and open water swimming. World Aquatics produces the rules for the sport and sanctions international competitions.



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