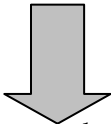
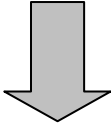
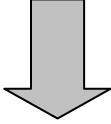
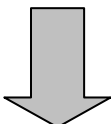

Using the Online Support for the NaRS (SAT) Award

This resource has been developed as a 'working document' in order to assist candidates understanding of pool hazards, risk assessment and 'pool safety operation procedures' (PSOP). The information that is presented provides the opportunity to raise standards in poolside supervision and the ability to deal competently with emergencies in a pool situation.

The support documentation is in the following 3 sections:

1. [The Role of the Professional Rescuer](#)
2. [Swimming Pool Safety](#)
3. [Guidance for the Preparation of a Site Specific NOP and EAP](#)

There are a number of key stages that it is recommended to follow to obtain the best results from using this resource:

- **Stage 1**
Thoroughly review the information presented within this Resource and discuss with your employer/manager any key issues and if necessary seek further clarification from the STA: sta@sta.co.uk
- 
- **Stage 2**
Prior to completing the risk assessment and site-specific information, obtain a copy of the current PSOP, conduct an audit of your current practices and standards against the criteria specified and record your findings.
- 
- **Stage 3**
Review your findings, from this review decide if further risk assessments are required and the PSOP needs updating
- 
- **Stage 4**
Complete the relevant forms as required i.e. Risk Assessment Form, Site-Specific Information Form
- 
- **Stage 5**
Review the above process on a regular basis and revise if necessary.

To assist in the above process you may download the following document templates that may be used in the initial assessment and as part of the ongoing monitoring of standards by the facility.

- [PSOP Action Plan \(Review\)](#)
- [Risk Assessment Form](#)
- [Client Organisation Risk Assessment Form](#)
- [Site Specific Information Checklist](#)

The Role of the Professional Rescuer

Role

The primary role of all pool rescuers is the prevention of accidents and ensuring the safety of customers, staff and other users of the facility.

People come to a swimming pool to enjoy themselves and therefore the rescuer must be able to distinguish what type of behaviour is and is not acceptable. When behaviour becomes unacceptable then the rescuer must have the skills necessary to prevent such behaviour continuing and where possible prevent it without alienating the customer. Nevertheless the safety of the bather, other customers and staff must remain paramount.

It should not be assumed that customer behaviour is the only threat to safety. There are many other potential causes of problems for example sudden illness, environmental considerations, hygiene, and breakdown of equipment. The rescuer must be able to react to circumstances that are considered to be a risk to the safety of customers and staff alike.

Other roles that may be undertaken by pool rescuers include:

- Carrying out a safety and hygiene inspection of the pool area.
- Cleaning and tidying an area ready for safe use.
- Checking and maintaining rescue equipment.
- Setting up and taking down equipment e.g. lane ropes, starting blocks etc.

Rescuer Uniform and Personal Equipment

The rescuer uniform needs to be distinctive and easily identifiable, especially in multipurpose centres where there are a large number of staff, not all necessarily rescuers. The internationally accepted colour scheme for lifeguards is red for jogging bottoms, shorts and skirts with yellow tops.

Rescuers should carry a whistle to enable communication with pool users and other team members. Also recommended as personal equipment are a pair of disposable rubber gloves to enable immediate first aid procedures to be initiated and a facemask to enable immediate resuscitation to take place.

Clothing provided for rescuers should be of a design appropriate to the role and should not hamper their ability to perform a rescue. Rescuers at open-air pools need to be protected from the environment, such as prolonged exposure to the sun or the cold and wet conditions that are often experienced. Where appropriate, a broad-brimmed hat, long sleeved shirt and polarising sunglasses should be worn and sun-block preparations used.

Rescuers' Duties

The duties of a rescuer can be defined by reference to the following key functions:

- Observation, keep a close watch over the pool and the pool users, exercising the appropriate level of control and supervision;
- Communicate effectively with pool users and colleagues;
- Awareness of problems and prevent accidents;
- Intervene to prevent behaviour which is unsafe;
- Identify emergencies quickly and take appropriate action;
- Effect a rescue from the water;
- Give immediate first aid to any casualty;
- Give Basic Life Support to any casualty and if available administer supplementary oxygen and automated external defibrillation if training has been received.
- Show awareness of the potential of a spinal injury when observing, supervising pool users and handling casualties.

In order to perform the duties set out above, rescuers will need to:

- Be physically fit, have good vision and hearing, be mentally alert and self-disciplined;
- Be strong, able and confident swimmers;
- Be trained and have successfully completed a course of training in the techniques and practices of supervision, rescue and first aid in accordance with a syllabus approved by a recognised training organisation;
- Receive a programme of induction (to include health and safety management) prior to undertaking their duties, and as specified by the pool operator;
- Receive a programme of regular ongoing training.

Physical Fitness

A rescuer should have a good level of physical fitness. A rescuer's level of hearing and vision should be appropriate to the environment in which they are working. Pool operators will need to take this into account when carrying out their risk assessment and ensure that the rescuer's standard of hearing and vision is such that it does not interfere with the duties the rescuer has to undertake.

Swimming Ability

It is strongly recommended that all rescuers are sufficiently fit and have the ability to swim. The risk assessment will determine what levels are needed for individual pools.

Induction and Ongoing Training

The NaRS (PSAT) Training Portfolio provides the employer and the rescuer the opportunity to develop the rescuer training and competence that is required for the site-specific element of the award. Further copies of this section may be required so that the rescuer can complete the process for every location they are responsible for.

If a rescuer feels there is a gap in their training or knowledge it is their responsibility to draw this to the attention of the employer particularly if this lack of knowledge prevents the rescuer carrying out the requirements of their job. The rescuer should ensure sufficient knowledge of all areas of responsibility.

Observation

Observation is one of the keys to accident prevention; rescuers should position themselves to allow as much of the water as possible to be observed. All areas of the pool must always be visible to the staff on duty. Rescuers must ensure that they can see into the water and the water quality enables them to see the bottom of the pool clearly.

It is important to show professionalism at all times and therefore rescuers should:

- Not stand together or in groups
- Not get distracted from the primary task of observation and prevention of potential problems
- Not leave their post without obtaining qualified cover
- Not turn their backs to the pool
- Not observe the pool from other areas where they may be distracted e.g. staff /first aid/locker rooms etc.
- Not train on their own - only in properly organised groups
- Not allow swimming if the pool conditions deteriorate e.g. low/high temperature, water becomes cloudy, too high/low chemical balance etc.

Rescuers should also:

- Be alert and vigilant at all times
- Be aware of potential problems and act to prevent them from occurring
- Only carry out cleaning or maintenance in the pool when it is being patrolled by a qualified rescuer
- Ensure the pool is not accessible for use by unsupervised individuals or groups.
- Report any problems and/or faults in equipment, water quality, etc. to the duty supervisor
- Know the Normal Operating Plan and Emergency Action Plan and act accordingly

Depending upon the number of rescuers, shape of the pool and activities taking place, there are several ways of observing bathers:

- Designated static lifeguard positions for observation.
- Lifeguard chairs give a higher view point for static observation

Both will allow a rescuer to either:

- Scan the pool – looking from one area to another or,
- Watch intensively one specific area such as a diving pit or flume ride

Poolside patrolling – allows more freedom to move around the pool interacting and reacting to bathers and any associated problems.

Irrespective of the method in use the observation should allow awareness of the surroundings, bather groups, pool features and/ or activities on the water surface, below the surface and on the pool floor.

All areas of the pool and its environs must be adequately observed and supervised. The pool should be divided into zones to ensure all areas are covered. Each zone will need to be continuously scanned. Zones will include the water area above and below the surface plus steps, ladders, activity equipment, walkways, entrances and the poolside.

Scanning is the skill required by rescuers to constantly watch a particular zone using a sweeping action. They will need to be able to scan their zone of supervision in 10 seconds and to be close enough to get to an incident within 20 seconds. This is an internationally recognised practice and is known as the 10:20 system

Zoning

Zoning may be:-

Intensive	Watching a specific area, e.g. diving pit, flume splash down, teaching pool.
Extensive	Watching the whole pool area.
Combined	Having an overview of the whole area whilst being responsible for a specific area as above.

Alertness

There are a number of fairly regular occurrences in swimming pools that are potentially dangerous and an experienced rescuer will always be alert to such situations. By getting to know the obvious, and not so obvious, potential incidents the rescuer will be able to react in a thoughtful manner and will be less likely to make mistakes.

Some of these incidents can be avoided if staff at the point of entry are vigilant when admitting customers and explain the dangers to them. The following are examples of those who may pose a risk:

- Customers entering the premises whilst under the influence of alcohol, drugs etc.
- Children under the age of 8 years old entering the premises unaccompanied by a responsible adult
- Insufficient responsible adults for the number of young children
- People with medical conditions e.g. epilepsy, diabetes, asthma etc.

Clearly it is not always possible to spot such potential problems at the entry to the premises and rescuers should remain vigilant and know how to respond to any eventuality. Common situations of potential risk are:

- Weak swimmers getting into difficulty
- Weak swimmers being interfered with by other swimmers thus causing panic
- People wandering into areas of the pool that are dangerous to them such as deep water and under diving boards
- Swimmers with armbands, floats and other swimming aids becoming too confident and straying into deep water
- Elderly people, people with disabilities, nervous people, and young people may have particular needs and require special vigilance by the rescuer. They may overestimate their abilities putting themselves under stress.
- Pregnant women who may experience problems associated with size or poor mobility.
- Parents with babies; the parent may need calming if there is a problem with the baby.
- Parents with toddlers; toddlers can move quickly but do not understand dangers.
- Children not properly supervised:
 - Children under 8 years old should not be allowed in the pool without a responsible person to accompany them (usually someone at least 16 years old).
 - A responsible person should not have more than two 5-8 year olds or one child under 5 years old to supervise, however local circumstances must be taken into account.
 - A responsible person should not usually supervise more than one child non-swimmer.

- People with medical conditions should be encouraged to inform the rescuer about such conditions in case of, for example, an asthma attack. This knowledge together with details of medication available will enable the rescuer to act promptly and correctly.
- People liable to epileptic attacks should always be accompanied by a responsible person.
- Customers under the influence of alcohol or drugs who should be asked to leave for their own safety and the safety of others. The customer care policy may suggest a refund of entrance fees would be sensible in such cases.

It is the responsibility of the rescuer to ensure the safety of all users, low risk swimmers can also drown or get into difficulty

In order to ensure alertness the rescuer must develop methods of work that aid concentration. Correct positioning and/or patrolling a given area may help but must not interfere, with maintaining correct vision over the area for which the rescuer is responsible

If the rescuer is positioned in a chair then they should only be expected to remain in that position for a limited time. Regular rotation of positions and periods away from the poolside of at least ten minutes or more should aid concentration and encourage alertness. *(This should be covered in your normal operating procedures)*. No one should remain at the same position for long periods of time.

When rescuers change positions, particularly if they are leaving the poolside, they should brief the incoming rescuer on any particular concerns they may have or on possible hazards they have noticed.

Maintaining Concentration

To help reduce boredom and increase concentration levels it is recommended NOP's give guidance on recommended observation patterns and position changes for specific pool zones. Depending on usage, rescuer rotations are recommended every 15, 20, 30 or 45 minutes; shorter rotation times help maintain alertness, while moving, walking and talking on changeovers help reduce boredom. Moving the head during scanning helps reduce eye fatigue assisting with maintaining concentration levels when scanning. Also focusing on one user per sweep and guessing the height, weight or colour of the costume, or mentally rehearse a rescue, especially of a potentially difficult user helps reduce the boredom and aid concentration.

5-minute Scanning Strategy

This is a useful method of observation devised by Dr. Tom Griffiths of Penn State University that promotes rescuers adopting the following **every 5 minutes**:

- **Change Posture** – either sitting in a lifeguard chair, or standing on poolside, or patrolling around the pool.
- **Change Position** – either to the left, right, or centre of the zone being observed.
- **Change Pattern** – of observation, such as in circles or squares; horizontal or vertical zig-zags; 'join the dots' head counts; divide into grids
- **Count Patrons** – or estimate numbers and make an accounting statement for the zone.

Communication

Rescuers will need to communicate with other rescuers and/ or pool management and will need to communicate with the pool users.

Communication with other Rescuers

There are various methods of rescuer communication from radio to whistles to hand signals. There may also be a telephone to contact the supervisor.

Common hand signals that are used are: -

Hand and arm raised straight up	To call attention to the rescuer, especially if entering the water.
Arm extended with hand raised	Stop, stay still.
Arm extended, index finger pointing	An indication to a bather or to another rescuer to observe.
Arm raised 90° at elbow level, index finger and thumb form a circle	O.K., I understand, everything is fine.

Common whistle signals that are used are:

One short whistle blast	To attract the attention of a pool user.
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One long whistle blast	To clear the pool at the end of a session or in an emergency.
Two short whistle blasts	To attract the attention of another rescuer.
Three short whistle blasts	To indicate the rescuer is entering the water and may need assistance, this may be accompanied with a raised arm.

Communicating with Pool users

When communicating with the pool customers the rescuer should remember:

- The communication method chosen for any group of participants should be appropriate.
- The aim is that all communications are clear, understandable and correct.
- Effort should be made to give information out promptly and accurately.
- All pools will have detailed procedures as to how and when information should be communicated to public and staff.
- There should be some checking process to ensure that pool rescuers, and others communicated to, clearly understand what is expected of them.
- Communication in this sphere is going to be verbal, written e.g. signs and posters, by demonstration or non-verbal, e.g. in terms of body language, etc.
- Developing relationships with participants and colleagues depends on good communication. This will not necessarily exist but will have to be developed to the benefit of all members of staff.
- Assistance or clarification should be requested at the appropriate time and be made to the person most able to deal with the problem.

Customer Care

The serious nature of a rescuers duty cannot be over emphasised, however neither can the fact that customers use swimming pools for enjoyment. The rescuer therefore has a difficult job balancing the needs of customers to enjoy themselves and the need to ensure safety. While safety must remain their primary concern rescuers must also develop customer care skills. The way a person is asked or told to refrain from a certain type of behaviour can be crucial. The correct approach will not embarrass or demean the customer but will give them the impression you are assisting them. However, there are times when a more authoritative approach may be appropriate and the rescuer must learn to use the correct judgement as to when this becomes necessary. Even in these circumstances customers should always be treated with courtesy and politeness.

Most employers will have a customer care policy - this should be carefully studied and practised.

In dealing with customers the rescuer should:

- Be friendly but authoritative - where applicable explain the reasons for behaving safely.
- Deal with any requests by a customer as quickly and politely as possible if it is appropriate to do so.
- Be aware of the equal opportunities policy in action and items such as gender, race, etc. should not affect the way in which customers are treated.
- Always remember that the individual's safety is the first priority and this must always be the case. Any situation identified that may endanger personal safety must be identified and reported at a early point, e.g., things like physical or sexual abuse or bullying, must be identified and reported to appropriate people at an early point
- Endeavour to keep any necessary interruptions are as brief as possible and cause the minimum disruption to the programme.
- Never physically contact customers unless effecting a rescue or giving first aid. Where possible have other staff around during treatment - try not to be alone.
- Give first warnings firmly but courteously. Persistent unacceptable behaviour should lead to the person being asked to leave the pool and/or spoken to by a supervisor as to future conduct.
- Not get into arguments on poolside, call a supervisor to deal with the offence away from the pool, arguments distract from correct observation.
- Call for police assistance, in extreme cases, to have the offender removed.
- Be alert and try to diffuse situations before they arise - preventative action is best
- Not overuse whistles, etc. a quiet word, a nod or a hand signal can often be enough.
- Not allow any over exuberant games, fighting, bullying or heavy petting as these types of behaviour can be unacceptable to other customers.
- Be aware that some customers, particularly but not exclusively, children will try to stay under water for long periods. This can lead to serious consequences. Some will try to stay down by holding on to

grating etc. This type of behaviour should be strongly discouraged by adequate explanations from the rescuer.

- Keep alert for any unusual, strange or unacceptable behaviour, if suspicions are raised warn other staff to keep a discrete watch and report the matter to the supervisor immediately.
- Never turn their back on or leave the pool without adequate cover. Chatting to friends, other staff and customers can be distracting. Keep it to an absolute minimum. If asked questions by customers explain why you are not talking directly to them if you are watching the pool. This will show them you are behaving professionally and not being deliberately rude or off hand.

General Rules and Regulations

Rules and regulations should be used to encourage safe and responsible behaviour. They can also be a tool to assist the rescuer to maintain safety. They should be kept realistic and enforceable - long lists of rules and regulations will not be read but seen as bureaucratic management. Nevertheless, drawing them to the attention of customers at the point of entry or on the walls of the changing rooms or pool hall may have beneficial effects.

Rules and regulations may include for example:-

- Pointing out the hazards in the pool e.g. slippery floors
- Illustrations of various types of behaviour that may increase the risk of drowning
- No diving due to the associated risk
- No smoking
- No pushing, bombing etc. due to risk of injuring others

The above are just some of the types of behaviour that may be covered by local rules and regulations. All clients must be aware of what action will be taken in the event of their behaviour not conforming with the rules on a consistent basis.

Assisting Customers

Rescuers can assist customers to make better use of the facilities by:

- Giving clear information on what facilities and services are available for customers use
- Ensuring that any notices are clearly visible, brief, and appropriately positioned in order to advise clients of opportunities and available facilities. Leaflets and promotional material should be checked regularly for accuracy and availability and re-stocked as required.
- Undertaking training in how to handle customers in a polite and helpful manner is essential.
- Preventing customers from doing anything which could be hazardous to themselves or others, while not being unnecessarily deprived of any of the facilities or services available.
- Actively looking for opportunities to assist customers, rather than waiting for customers to come to them whilst still maintaining a safe level of observation and supervision.
- Being well briefed on exactly what facilities and services are available within the facility.

Customer complaints should be recorded and acted upon promptly giving customers appropriate feedback.

Swimming Pool Safety

The Pool and Pool Safety

A strategy for creating a safer pool environment should be based on a properly prepared **Pool Safety Operating Procedures Document**, details of which are set out below.

Safety Policy

The Health and Safety Policy is the core document from which the implementation of safe systems of work develops.

The policy and any revisions must be brought to the attention of all employees ensuring that they are aware of its principles and purpose. **Every organisation employing five or more persons is required by law to have a written safety policy statement, which must be unique to that organisation.** The safety policy is the starting point for the organisations commitment to safe working practices and comprises of three key elements:

1. Commitment – the commitment to safe working practices and a safe and healthy working environment to reduce risk.
2. Health and Safety Responsibilities – it is imperative that everyone knows their responsibilities and each employee must take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions. All staff must point out any shortfalls in Health and Safety arrangements and practices and follow work practices in accordance with their training and instruction.
3. Arrangements for Safety – the policy should outline arrangements that must be in place for the Facility. This is usually a general statement referencing procedure manuals which detail the safe systems of work e.g. first aid; risk assessment arrangements; dealing with hazardous substances, etc.

The Proprietor, Chief Executive, Head Teacher, School Governer or the Managing Director usually signs the Policy statement.

Competent Persons

Competency can be examined at four levels: -

1. The fully qualified Professional Health and Safety Advisor, providing valuable technical advice, review and guidance.
2. The Operations Manager or Senior Instructor/Teacher or Owner in charge of the facility who must have sufficient knowledge and skill to recognise situations, which may cause harm, and then implement suitable preventative and corrective actions for Health and Safety purposes. This may include documenting and the implementation of safe working procedures and practices, effective recruitment of personnel, organising training, monitoring and reviewing Health and Safety performance and taking suitable corrective action.
3. Teachers, Instructors, Assistants – all staff who must be competent and trained to perform their roles safely and adequately. This can be achieved by effective induction “on the job” training, and external training and qualifications, as well as defined procedures. All staff should only perform tasks that they are properly trained for and have achieved the necessary skills to execute their duties correctly. It is essential that employees inform employers of any short falls in Health and Safety skills that they experience. Competence may also be demonstrated by the achievement of National Vocational Qualifications.
4. The nominated Competent Person (within the facility) to assist in implementing and undertaking Health and Safety measures as required by the Management of Health and Safety Regulations to provide day to day support in addition to any external professional assistance. The Competent Person must have sufficient training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to undertake the work involved. They should have the capacity to apply this to the task required e.g. setting and implementing safety objectives and be aware of their own limitations, experience and

knowledge, and if in doubt where to obtain assistance. Therefore the nominated Competent Person is responsible for; translating general regulations into facility specific controls; implementing industry best practices; liaison with and seeking advice from specialists; and the day to day proactive management of Health and Safety.

Risk Assessment

Where a facility employs **five or more employees the law requires a documented risk assessment to be carried out**. The purpose of a risk assessment is to assess the adequacy of control of hazards.

- **A Hazard** is something with the potential to cause harm and is always there.
- **A Risk** is the likelihood that the particular harm that a hazard may cause will actually happen.

Risk is assessed by examining the actual arrangements in place and their adequacy in controlling the hazards by observation, examining documented evidence, interviewing staff and by various other records. The outcome of the exercise should be a prioritised action plan for risk reduction, which may be implemented for example, through improved safe working practices, the introduction of more specific staff training, or if at all possible the complete removal of the hazard altogether.

The Risk Assessor must have a reasonable understanding of work practices and an appreciation of key statutory requirements. A pool has many hazards and conducting a risk assessment is only the first stage. Risk Assessments should be conducted on a planned frequency whenever services or procedures change or where there are suspected Health and Safety problems. All staff must be aware of the risks associated with their working environment.

Principles of Risk Assessment

Step 1 Look for the hazards

Look at what may cause harm to employees, or other people, as a result of the work activity.

Step 2 Decide who might be harmed and how

Assess who may be affected by the work activity and how they may be affected; this may include members of the public, students, parents, contractors working on the premises and maintenance personnel (if appropriate).

Step 3 Assess the risks and take appropriate action

For each identified hazard which may be a risk to employees, or other people, it must be determined what steps have to be taken to eliminate or reduce those risks as far as is reasonably practical. The measures to be taken depends on whether the hazard is low risk or high risk, this is determined by looking at what type of harm or injury may arise and how often it may happen.

It may be possible to remove the hazard altogether or to take steps to lower the risk to an acceptable level. If there is no risk present, then no action need be taken. Confirm that risks have been reduced as far as possible by checking facility standards against published guidance such as relevant HSE publications.

Step 4 Record the findings

Facilities employing five or more persons are required by law to record the significant findings from a risk assessment. The record must contain details of the more significant hazards and record the most important conclusions. There is no need to record how the risk assessment was carried out, provided that the records confirm that:

- A proper check was made;
- Those who might be affected were consulted;
- All the obvious significant hazards were dealt with and account was taken of the number of people who could be involved;
- The precautions are reasonable and the remaining risk is low.

Step 5 Review the assessment from time to time and revise it if necessary

It is important that the risk assessments are checked from time to time, especially if there is a change in working procedures. In particular new hazards and new legislation must be taken into account.

Organisation of Safety

The Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999 require the employer to document work arrangements for the planning, organisation, monitoring, control and review of Health and Safety measures.

Effective implementation of safe working practices must be ensured and systems put in place to monitor, measure, review and improve Health and Safety systems. These should not be separate from other organisation procedures, i.e. Quality Procedures, etc. A systematic approach is required to ensure that arrangements are thorough, with sufficient controls to ensure that arrangements are actually implemented.

Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOP)

A written Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOP) consists of the Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) and the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for the pool, changing facilities and any associated plant (if appropriate) and equipment. The plans can be kept as written documents or stored electronically, provided that staff have access to them and that they are available for inspection by your enforcing authority, if required.

The NOP should set out the way a pool operates on a daily basis. It should include details of the layout, equipment, manner of use, user group characteristics and any hazards or activity-related risks.

The EAP should give specific instructions on the action to be taken, by all staff, in the event of any emergency.

Staff must not only be aware of the PSOP, NOP and EAP but also should be instructed and trained to work in accordance with the provisions therein.

All parts of the PSOP should be regularly reviewed and revised if necessary, particularly with the installation of new equipment or after a major accident, eg an accident which requires hospitalisation of the injured person or a near drowning. Staff and outside organisations should be made aware when a revision has taken place.

Where the pool is an ancillary part of a larger complex (eg a hotel, hospital or school), a senior member of the team should be clearly designated as responsible for safe pool operation.

Normal Operating Procedures (NOP)

An NOP should cover the following:

- a) **Detail of the pool(s)** – dimensions and depths, features and equipment and a plan of the building. The plan of the building may include positions of pool alarms, fire alarms, emergency exit routes and any other relevant information.
- b) **Potential risk** – an appreciation of the main hazards and of users particularly at risk is required before safe operating procedures can be identified.
- c) **Dealing with the public** – arrangements for communicating safety messages to customers, customer care, poolside rules for the public and for lifeguards, controlling access.
- d) **Lifeguards duties and responsibilities** and special supervision requirements for equipment, etc; lifeguard training; and numbers of lifeguards for particular activities (if appropriate)
- e) **Systems of work** including lines of supervision, call-out procedures, work rotation and maximum poolside working times.
- f) **Operational systems** – controlling access to a pool or pools intended to be out of use including the safe use of pool covers.
- g) **Detailed work instructions** including pool cleaning procedures (if appropriate), safe setting up and checking of equipment.
- h) **First-aid supplies and training**, including equipment required, its location, arrangements for checking it, first aiders, first-aid training and disposal of sharps.
- i) **Details of alarm systems and any emergency equipment, maintenance arrangements** – all alarm systems and emergency equipment provided, including operation, location, action to be taken on hearing the alarm, testing arrangements and maintenance.
- j) **Conditions of hire to outside organisations** (if appropriate).

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Action to be taken in the event of a foreseeable emergency, for example:

1. Overcrowding;
2. Disorderly behaviour;
3. Lack of water clarity;
4. Outbreak of fire (or sounding of alarm to evacuate the building);
5. Bomb threat;
6. Lighting failure;
7. Structural failure;
8. Emission of toxic gases;
9. Serious injury to a bather;
10. Discovery of a casualty in the water.

The procedure should make it clear, if it becomes necessary, how to clear the water or evacuate the building. To ensure the effectiveness of emergency procedures management should ensure:

1. All staff are adequately trained in such procedures.
2. Notices are displayed to advise the general public of the arrangements.
3. Exit doors, signs, fire-fighting equipment and break-glass call points where provided, should be checked regularly to ensure they are kept free from obstructions.
4. All fire exit doors are operable without the aid of a key at all times the premises are occupied.

Emergency Procedures

The EAP will detail the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency situation arising:

- Clear guidelines on action to be taken and procedures must be compiled and circulated to all staff.
- Staff training on necessary action is essential.
- Information on procedures should be readily available to all staff and located where it is easily found in the event of an emergency.
- Any emergency equipment must be to hand and staff should be well trained in its use.
- Everyone must be well aware of who to contact in the case of emergency, and, when appropriate, how to contact them, for example:
 - Emergency services
 - Doctor
 - Head of Department/ Supervising Officer
 - Health and Safety Executive
 - Relative or next of kin of injured party
- Practice drills must be held with all staff playing their part in a staged emergency. This should be as realistic as practicable and must take place on a regular basis.
- An observer should record staff response against a set checklist to assess the speed and correctness of their response to an emergency.
- Recording procedures for practices and real incidents must be careful and correct and point out any difficulties in carrying out the emergency action plan.
- Reports on happenings and practices must be made quickly and to appropriate superiors.
- A range of possible emergencies should be simulated to expose staff to a variety of circumstances and the actions to be taken for each e.g. fire, flood, bomb alert, etc
- Staff must be very clear on their specific role in every emergency situation.

EAP's should follow an ordered system of procedures; the order in which they are taken may vary depending on the incident:

- Initial awareness and assessment of the incident e.g. spot the casualty.
- Initiation of the EAP e.g. sound alarm and clear the pool.
- Deal with the incident and call the Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Provide aftercare e.g. give first aid and positive reassurance.
- Notify the relevant line management e.g. shift supervisor or duty manager.
- Complete the necessary incident and accident report forms
- Return to normal, e.g. clear up any contamination, replace any first aid consumables used, return any equipment used, clean if necessary.
- Investigation and debriefing of incident, this may include counselling.

You must follow the guidance of your own site-specific Pool Safety Operating Procedures, employees have a personal responsibility to obtain copies of the relevant documents and adhere to them, and **failure to do so may render them personally liable**. If you are involved in an incident do not give comments to any witnesses, bystanders or reporters, redirect any questions to your management team. The PSOP should contain a policy for dealing with the press and public in respect of any major incident, especially if this involves a death of a customer.

Recording and Reporting Accidents

- Clear staff lines of communications are essential. All staff roles and responsibilities with regard to health and safety must be widely known and understood.
- A detailed record of all accidents must be kept, giving all necessary information.
- All completed records must be correctly stored, allowing easy retrieval.
- Notification of the accident, and the details surrounding it, must be passed to appropriate superiors.
- If the accident is serious, copies of the forms may be required by the Health and Safety Executive, and the relevant legal authorities.
- Careful recording is essential. It may be that an accident could lead to death, serious injury or time off work. This in turn could lead to sizeable legal and financial claims. Inaccurate recording could prejudice the outcome of such actions.
- Staff must be trained on how to complete forms correctly, especially bearing in mind the possible legal outcome.
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) provides for the recording and reporting of specific accidents.
- Any difficulties with carrying out normal operating procedures or emergency procedures must be recorded and passed to a supervising officer immediately after the incident.

On the following pages are a sample Risk Assessment Form together with a copy for completion.

Risk Assessment Form (EXAMPLE)

Risk Assessment Record		Area Assessed:	Date:			Risk Reduction Plan (Addition Control Measures where risk is not adequately controlled)
Significant Hazards	Identify who are at risk	Identify existing Control Measures	Risk Rating			
Identify hazards which you could reasonably expect to cause significant harm	Identify the groups of people	Hazards that have been identified, do the precautions	High	Medium	Low	
For example: Slipping/tripping Cracked tiles Floors & Surfaces Lighting levels Water quality Poorly maintained equipment Fixtures & Fittings	For example: Teachers Students Lifeguards Parents Customers Particular attention should be given to specialist groups For example: Special Needs Baby & Pre School	Meet legal requirements Comply with industry best practice Reduce the levels of risk 'as far as is reasonably practicable' In addition have you also provided: Information and/or instruction and/or training				Example
Any additional Comments			Review Date (Recommended at minimum annually)			
Signed		Authority				Note: Any amendments to the risk assessment should be recorded as part of your Risk Reduction Plan.

Risk Assessment Form

Risk Assessment Record		Area Assessed:	Risk Rating			Date:	Risk Reduction Plan (Addition Control Measures where risk is not adequately controlled)
Significant Hazards	Identify who are at risk	Identify existing Control Measures	High	Medium	Low		
<p>Identify hazards which you could reasonably expect to cause significant harm</p> <p>For example: Slipping/tripping Cracked tiles Floors & Surfaces Lighting levels Water quality Poorly maintained equipment Fixtures & Fittings</p>	<p>Identify the groups of people</p> <p>For example: Teachers Students Lifeguards Parents Customers Particular attention should be given to specialist groups</p> <p>For example: Special Needs Baby & Pre School</p>	<p>Hazards that have been identified, do the precautions</p> <p>Meet legal requirements Comply with industry best practice Reduce the levels of risk 'as far as is reasonably practicable' In addition have you also provided: Information and/or instruction and/or training</p>					
Any additional Comments	Review Date (Recommended at minimum annually)						
Signed	Authority					<p>Note: Any amendments to the risk assessment should be recorded as part of your Risk Reduction Plan.</p>	

Guidance Framework for the Preparation of a Site Specific Normal Operating Procedure and Emergency Action Plan

Normal Operating Procedures (NOP)

The Normal Operating Procedures are designed to regulate the safe operation of the Swimming Pool and its environment on a site specific basis.

All staff involved in the Facility should be completely familiar with both the Normal Operating Procedure and the Emergency Action Plan.

Only in emergencies should the Normal Operating Procedure be varied to suit the individual circumstances and the document which covers this is the Emergency Action Plan.

The sample framework (NOP) only provides guidance on the key issues that should be considered as a minimum requirement for inclusion in a NOP and therefore is not exhaustive.

Facilities that hire out to other organisations should ensure that the Pool Safety Operating Procedures reflect the client organisations documented procedures.

Pool Specifications and Design

This section should provide information on the pool specification its design and support facilities for example:

Pool Layout	Description
Intended Use	<i>The pool is used for teaching and swimming coaching</i>
Dimensions	<i>25m X 17m community pool</i>
Depth	<i>Deepest point - 2 m</i>
Entry to Pool Hall	<i>From changing accommodation</i>
Entry and Exit points to the pool	<i>All 4 corners of the pool</i>
Exit from Pool Hall	<i>Through changing accommodation & emergency exits</i>
Changing Rooms	<i>Entry at shallow end of pool</i>
First Aid	<i>Situated next to changing accommodation</i>
Storage Areas	<i>One poolside store and baskets on poolside</i>
Seating	<i>No spectator seating</i>
Disinfecting System	<i>Sodium Hypochlorite and Hydrochloric acid</i>
Any unusual Features	<i>None</i>
Turnover period	<i>2 hours</i>

Pool Features and Equipment

This section should describe the key features within the Pool and surrounding area and also identify any important operational issues for example:

- Water Features (flumes)
- Movable Floors
- Lifeguard positions

Potential Risks

The management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require that the risks arising from their activities, both to members of staff and customers, are assessed.

All and any potential risks should be identified and could be categorised under the following headings:

People Hazards

For example:

- People with Special Needs
- People with language difficulties

Activity Hazards

For example:

- Running on Poolside
- Throwing of pool equipment
-

Physical Hazards

For example:

- Access from changing areas to deep or unknown water depths
- Slippery floor surfaces

A sample Risk Assessment form is shown on page 13

Dealing with members of the Public

Consideration could be given under this section to preparing a policy or Code of Conduct on how Teachers/Instructors/ Assistants should interact with customers, for example:

- Providing safety information
- Dealing with customer complaints

Roles and Responsibilities

This section should clearly identify who is responsible for Health and Safety within the Facility and describe the different roles and responsibilities for all Operational Staff. Consideration could also be given to specifying the qualifications that are the minimum standards expected of employees working within the facility.

Systems of Work

Systems of work could cover for example:

- General work practices
- Communication practice
- Staffing to student ratios
- Levels of supervision

Operational Systems

This section should identify the systems and procedures that will need to be in place to ensure that the systems used by the facility are 'fit for purpose'. For example:

- Check list (for equipment loose and fixed)
- Testing if appropriate of Pool Alarms, water quality, means of access
- Child Protection Policy
- Missing Persons Policy

Detailed Work Instructions

Any 'Work Instructions' relating to, for example, the setting up and dismantling of equipment would normally be attached as an Appendix to the NOP.

First Aid Location and Training

The location of the first aid room and/or equipment and the qualified First Aider within the facility should be known by all staff.

All first aid accidents, incidents or near misses should be reported and recorded.

The facility needs to ensure that it complies with all relevant Health & Safety (HSE) regulations with particular reference to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulation 1995.

Alarm Systems & Emergency Equipment

In circumstances where the facility manages its own Pool in conjunction with the building plans it should identify and clearly mark up the location of its alarms and emergency lighting for example:

Pool Emergency Alarm

'The pool has X number of pool alarms located around the pool. The pool alarms are to be tested in rotation each morning and recorded on the daily check sheets'

Pool Alarms	Location	Building Zone
Swimming Pool; Emergency Button 1	Poolside 1 x plantroom end wall	Zone A

Action on hearing the Alarm

'Move directly to the Poolside to deal with a Poolside Emergency' Refer to EAP

Hire of Facilities

If the facility is hired from a client organisation the Client Risk Assessment Form should be completed. A suitable form for photocopying is on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Your Pool Safety Operating Procedures should reflect the key operational issues identified within the clients Pool Safety Operating Procedures as a minimum.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Introduction

An important objective for the facility should be that any and all emergency situations are dealt with in a manner that minimises risk to both customers and staff.

The sample framework (EAP) only provides guidance on the key issues that should be considered as a minimum requirement for inclusion in an EAP and therefore is not exhaustive.

When hiring facilities off other organisations you should ensure that your Pool Safety Operating Procedures reflect the client organisations documented procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is vital that all staff within the facility are aware of their individual roles and responsibilities whilst either supervising or teaching/instructing/assisting and specifically when carrying out actions specified within the EAP.

Pool Incident Procedures: Minor Emergencies

A minor emergency is an incident that, if managed effectively, does not normally result in a life-threatening situation, although procedures will need to be in place. These may include, for example:

- Supervisor, Teacher/Instructor, Assistant becomes aware of an incident
- Other Team Members respond and provide support

- Staff member administers immediate first aid if appropriate
- Recording and Reporting accident/incident

Pool Incident Procedure: Major Emergency

A major emergency is one where an incident occurs which could result in a serious life threatening situation. In many cases it may involve more than one member of staff and could in certain circumstances require additional assistance from either non-teaching staff or non-pool staff, and therefore procedures will need to be in place, which may include, for example:

- Activation of Pool Alarm to raise awareness that support is required immediately
- Team members responding and assisting the situation
- Initiate immediate first aid and if appropriate remove the casualty from the danger area
- Support team cover the pool if required and in most cases the pool will be evacuated
- Emergency Services called
- Recording and Reporting accident/incident
- Counselling of staff following the accident/incident

Procedures and training may also need to be in place to respond effectively and efficiently to a range of potentially serious incidents covering for example:

- Discovery of a casualty in the water
- Removal of a casualty with a suspected Spinal Injury
- Rescue from deep water
- Stabilising the casualty
- Removal of a casualty with a Spinal Cord injury from water
- Removal of a casualty using a Spinal Board

Remember as a result of a minor injury, major injury, fatality or near miss an accident report form will be required to be completed and in certain circumstances will need to be reported under the 'Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995.

Additional Emergency Procedure(s)

The Emergency Action Plan will also need to provide guidance and direction, if appropriate, on the key actions to be undertaken in a range of different emergency situations for example:

- Pool Contamination/Pool Clarity
- Fire Alarm/Fire Evacuation Procedures
- Bomb Scare/Evacuation Procedures
- Lighting and/or Power failure
- Minor/Major Chemical Spillage
- Structural Failure
- Broken Glass
- Emission of Toxic Gases
- Gas Leak
- Water Leak
- Procedures for dealing with blood, vomit, diarrhoea and faeces
- Syringes
- Burglary/Robbery
- Physical and verbal violence to staff and customers
- Missing Persons
- Vulnerable Adults

Client Organisation Risk Assessment Form

Pool _____

Manager/ Contact _____ Phone No. _____

Pool Details:

Length _____ Width _____

Minimum Depth _____ Maximum Depth _____

Bottom Profile	Sloping		Flat		Movable		“V”	
----------------	---------	--	------	--	---------	--	-----	--

Awareness of associated risks:

- Inlets
- Outlets
- Grids
- Steps
- Diving Blocks

Awareness of pool features:

- Diving pit
- Flume
- Rails
- Scum troughs
- Deck height
- Other

Attach pool plan from management or attach simple sketch plan indicating risks, features, safety points (first aid box, rescue equipment etc.) and emergency evacuation routes.

NOP examined & issued on: _____

EAP examined & issued on: _____

Client Swimming Pool & Changing Accommodation, Risk Assessments, examined & issued on: _____

Note any special requirements

Emergency evacuation routes examined on _____

Note any special access problems for those with disabilities

Level of Lifeguard cover checked on _____

Note level of cover and division of responsibilities

Who is responsible for the changing rooms _____

Facility name

Signature/Status

Date of this assessment _____ Date of last assessment _____

Reason for assessment

Initial assessment Periodic review Change of equipment/ procedures

Note: It is recommended that the above form is completed prior to the first lesson at a pool new to a Facility. It should be regularly updated; in the case of school pools at the beginning of each term and in other pools at least once per annum.

PSOP Action Plan (Review)

Comments	
Review Date	
Deadline Date	
Responsible Person	
Action Required	
Area of Concern	

Name of Facility _____

Pool Location _____

Date _____

Site Specific Information Checklist

Facility: _____ Date: _____

1. What is the size of the pool?

--

2. What are the minimum and maximum depths of the pool?

--

3. What is the maximum bather load for the pool?

--

4. What are the areas of potential risk in and around the pool?

5. What is the alarm system in use?

6. What rescue equipment is provided around the pool and where is it located?

7. What first aid equipment is available and where is it located?

8. What is the emergency telephone procedure?

9. What is the address of the pool for advising the emergency services?

10. Where is the entrance and exit for the emergency services?

--

11. What are the procedures for assisting the emergency services?

12. What is the procedure for reporting an accident or incident?

13. What are the pool rules?

14. What are the procedures for clearing the pool?

15. What are the emergency evacuation procedures?

16. What are the procedures on discovering a casualty in the water?

17. What are the procedures if there is serious injury to a bather?

18. What action is to be taken if there is lack of water clarity?

19. What actions are taken to prevent overcrowding of the pool?

20. What are the procedures for informing bathers of the pool rules?
