

# 3.1 Beginners

## Learn to be safe

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Attend the club's induction programme and follow advice and guidance provided
- Ask a coach or club official about any aspects of safety you are concerned or unsure about
- Take responsibility for your own safety and the safety of others affected by your activities
- Be aware of key club and sport policies and where to find them



#### Club

- Ensure that all beginners take part in an effective club induction programme that has an emphasis on safe practice
- Ensure a higher level of duty of care is promoted with beginners, juniors, adaptive rowers and vulnerable adults
- Support the principle that safety is everyone's responsibility
- Ensure the health, safety and welfare of the individual is the overriding principle
- Ensure that all members set an example for beginners to follow



#### Coach

- Ensure all rowers have an adequate club induction programme – and check their understanding of what is expected of them
- Set standards that athletes will follow – lead by example
- Ensure a higher level of duty of care is promoted with beginners, juniors, adaptive rowers and vulnerable adults



#### Club Water Safety Adviser/Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Monitor compliance with Minimum Standards set in this guidance for clubs and competitions, through inspections and the Club Water Safety Audit system

## Minimum standards to be adopted

Before any activity takes place with beginners the following information must be recorded by the club:

- Swimming ability – advise them of the test they will need to pass

- Advice given on the need to discuss medical conditions that could affect safe practice
- Personal contact details for emergency contacts
- Parental or guardian consent given for juniors to participate

Local induction programmes must to be set up by clubs to ensure beginners are successfully and safely introduced into the sport and club operations. By the end of the club induction programme participants must have been given basic information or training on the following topics:

- Risk assessments – what are they and why they need to be done?
- Local hazards – what are they? Where are they? How are they controlled?
- Navigation rules – communicate these, where and where not to go and give reasons for rules
- Emergencies – what to do, how to summon help – nearest telephone (mobile phone dead zones)
- Equipment – function and safety checks to perform before each outing, including boat buoyancy checks and the need to check when returning to the club
- Manual handling – how to lift, carry and handle boats and equipment
- First Aid – who is the First Aider? where is the First Aid Box?
- Incident reporting – what needs reporting, to whom and why?
- Safety equipment – what types, storage, rules on using and how to use, maintenance and location
- Club Officers – Water Safety Adviser, Captain, Welfare Officer, etc.
- Capsize/swampings - what to do if it happens to you or someone else
- PFDs – what types, rules on wearing, storage, how to use, maintenance and location
- Clothing – what to wear and what not to wear and why
- Cold water immersion and hypothermia – issues, controls, reporting
- Supervision – when they can and cannot go afloat, session times, duration
- Boat booking board – how and why to use this, need in emergencies
- Weather – be aware of local forecasts and conditions
- Boat outing restrictions – temperature, water conditions, tidal, times of the day/year
- Water-borne diseases – symptoms, hygiene, etc.
- Night and poor visibility rowing – rules, lights, etc.
- Safety Notice Boards – location
- Boat types – suitability
- Personal responsibility for safety

Clubs should ensure that beginners know where and how they can obtain further information on the above topics.

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Clubs should have the following controls in place to cover beginners' activities:

- Risk assessments – should cover age, swim ability, capsize, water/air temperature, weather conditions, stream, current, hazards, other water users, skill level/experience, boat type, clothing
- Trained coaches – Level 2 or IA for water activities
- Safety launches – drivers RYA 2 or equivalent trained
- Boat outing board – outing times duration
- Safety Notice Board – latest guidance, emergency numbers, Water Safety Adviser, incident reporting, detailed plan of water, hazards, navigation rules, flow patterns etc.
- Capsize drill – system for ensuring beginners know what to do, via practices, demonstrations, video, etc.
- Communication system for summoning emergency assistance
- System for restricting access to damaged equipment
- If a member is unable to swim – a suitable PFD must be worn whilst on the water

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Document induction – capture details of when conducted and what was covered
- Guidance on outings in respect of particular disabilities or illnesses (eg epilepsy)
- Swimming and capsize drills performed regularly – use local swimming pool
- Policy on wearing of PFDs for beginners and juniors – set one and communicate and enforce
- Logbooks – need to record progress of beginners, to improve development, monitor safety and enable communication between coaches and athletes
- Throw lines – need to practise use of them for all members
- First Aid room or recovery room
- System for reporting damaged equipment to all members
- Navigation – use of charts/drawings/diagrams
- Juniors – parents to be encouraged to attend first session
- Vulnerable Adults – clubs and coaches to be aware of the individual's background and needs and follow the ARA's 'Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy'

**ARA Epilepsy Policy:** 'Those who suffer from epilepsy should not be allowed on the water when there is a significant risk of further seizures. In line with the recommendations of the Driving Vehicle Licence Agency (DVLA), this period of significant risk is defined as within one year following a fit and whilst reducing medication and for six months after stopping it, except where there is a special individualized risk assessment of the rower and the event. Equally launch drivers should follow this advice.'

## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment
- 1.3 Club Safety Plans
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 1.9 Swimming & Capsize/Swamping Training
- 2.1 Safety Aids

### ARA website

- Row Safe: Key Points for Your Safe Rowing

### Other

- Level 2 Coaching Manual

