



## Education

Department of **Education** (<https://det.qld.gov.au>)

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# Swimming in locations other than pools

Guideline review date: December 2017

The CARA planner (DOC, 423KB) (<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/management/Procedure%20Attachments/Managing%20Risks%20in%20School%20Curriculum%20Activities/Curriculum%20Activity%20Risk%20Planner.DOC>) must be used in conjunction with this guideline to determine additional risk hazards and controls within school-specific circumstances.

## Activity scope

This guideline relates to student participation in swimming at locations other than a swimming pool, as a curriculum activity. Locations may include clear, shallow, calm and confined swimming areas at natural venues (e.g. dams and non-surf beaches), clear, deep and/or flowing swimming areas (e.g. lakes, rivers, deep non-surf beaches and dams), bodies of water exposed to currents, strong winds, large waves and/or access to open waters (e.g. beaches exposed to rip and swell conditions, and lakes or rivers exposed to currents).

Refer to the Swimming in pools (</curriculum/school-curriculum/CARA/activity-guidelines/swimming-in-pools>) activity guideline for swimming carnivals, learn to swim and training and/or squads.

For activities beyond the scope of this activity a separate risk assessment must be undertaken using the CARA generic template (DOCX, 401KB) (<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/management/Procedure%20Attachments/Managing%20Risks%20in%20School%20Curriculum%20Activities/CARA-generic-template.docx>).

**High risk:** Swimming activities at locations other than a swimming pool, as a curriculum activity.

All requirements are necessary for the activity to be conducted.

### Mandatory requirements

- Obtain parental/carer consent and a medical questionnaire/declaration for high risk activities. (Note: Students with a medical condition that may impact on their safety must be cleared by a medical practitioner prior to participation in the activity).
- Follow the advice found in Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water (<https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/guidelines-managing-risks-recreational-water>) and at Beachsafe (<https://beachsafe.org.au/>).
- Establish and implement safety procedures appropriate to the activity. This must include, but is not limited to, the checklists found in the Royal Life Saving Fact Sheets (<https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/schools/out-and-about/locations>), the location of the activity (e.g. Inland waterways (<https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/families/out-and-about/locations/inland-waterways>), Beach safety (<https://beachsafe.org.au/about>)), and the identification/control of drowning or injury hazards at the location.
- Establish and implement procedures appropriate to the activity, location and conditions. This must include, but is not limited to, safety, emergencies (e.g. drowning, injury, first aid), resuscitation, communication (e.g. assistance, emergency services, parent notification) and supervision.
- Refer to the School excursions and international school study tours (<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/management/Pages/School-Excursions.aspx>) procedure for off-site swimming activities.
- Ensure the school's sun safety strategy ([/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/student-health/sun-safety-strategies](#)) is followed.
- Induct students on procedures for emergency, safety procedures and correct technique.

## Supervision requirements

- At least 2 adult supervisors must be present for recovery and supervision roles to manage the activity safely (including emergency situations). Consider the age/size/ability/maturity of students in this supervision ratio decision. Principals make decisions about the supervision requirements.
- **At all times**, at least 1 adult supervisor with capability and competence (knowledge and skills) to assist/recover a student must be ready to perform a rescue. **At no time**, should students be relied upon to recover a swimmer in difficulty.
- Ensure adult supervisors are visible and easily identified and all students are in sight of at least 1 adult supervisor at all times.

## Qualifications for supervisors

### High risk level

The adult supervisor with overall responsibility for the activity must hold **one of the following**:

- A statement of attainment from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) or governing sporting body covering:
  - SISCAQU002 – Perform basic water rescues (previously SISACU202A) **and**
  - HLTAID001 – Provide Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (previously HLTCPR211A) **and**
  - HLTAID003 – Provide first aid (previously HLTF311A)
  - or equivalent units of competency.

(This may be 1 adult with multiple qualifications or multiple adults.)

or

- A qualification in the supervision of recreational swimming in the specific activity environment and the ability to perform rescues in this environment, as determined by the Principal. For support in

determining qualifications and competence refer to the Content – practical (<https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/training/bronze-medallion>) section on Royal Life Saving Society – Australia website. (<https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/>)

In circumstances where 1 adult supervisor holds both the water rescue qualification and the Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation qualification and is involved in an emergency situation, another adult supervisor will be required to ensure students exit the water safely and manage effective supervision of students.

Note: Consideration of the risks associated with the specific aquatic environment where the activity is to take place should account for the adult supervisors' capability, relevance and currency.

## Requirements for facilities and equipment

- The aquatic environment contains a clearly defined swimming area (e.g. between the flags on the patrolled beach).
- Readily available flotation and reaching aids (e.g. light-weight poles, pool noodles or ropes with a float attached) are provided for clear and/or flowing swimming areas or rescue equipment (e.g. a rescue tube and rescue board) for bodies of water exposed to rips, waves or currents.
- An emergency signal (e.g. whistle, air horn).
- Consent and insurance requirements must be met and approved by the Principal, if privately owned equipment is being used.

# Hazards and controls

If any listed control measure below cannot be met:

- modify the activity (or elements of it)
- and/or

- identify and implement alternative control measures to meet or exceed the level of safety.

Alternative or additional considerations, hazards and control measures must be included in the planning process.

## Before the activity

| Hazards                                  | Control measures   |
|--|--|
| Considering environmental conditions     | <p>Check with the local authority (e.g. council) for the presence of water contaminants (e.g. oil spill, blue-green algae) and other dangers (e.g. stonefish, blue-ring octopus, crocodiles). Refer to Australian Institute of Marine Sciences (<a href="http://www.aims.gov.au/">http://www.aims.gov.au/</a>) for information on stonefish and other dangerous Australian marine animals. Refer to Queensland Poisons Information Centre (<a href="https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/queensland-poisons-information-centre/">https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/queensland-poisons-information-centre/</a>) for further information about types of poisoning and treatment available, or phone 13 11 26</p> <p>Assess weather conditions (Bureau of Meteorology (<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/">http://www.bom.gov.au/</a>)) and obtain advice from the local authority (e.g. lifeguards, park rangers, councils) about local environmental conditions</p> <p>Select a location considering the depth of water (appropriate to the ability of the students), tidal flow and currents, water visibility/temperature, marine life, underwater hazards (e.g. vegetation, rocks, debris, logs) and watercraft using the location</p> <p>Define the boundaries of the safe swimming area. Depending on the location, it is recommended that rope floats or anchored buoys linked with ropes be used</p> |
| Accessing facilities and using equipment | <p>Seek confirmation (if possible) regarding emergency action plans, rescue processes and roles, availability and qualifications of any personnel on site (e.g. lifeguard service). When swimming at a patrolled beach, advise the lifeguard/lifesaving service on duty of the group's location and the intention for the activity</p> <p>Ensure a pontoon, boat or float is in close proximity to students in open water</p>  |

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
|                                 | <p>Ensure stinger suits and/or footwear is worn in the water when appropriate for the swimming area (e.g. enclosed footwear with thick soles when swimming in creeks or estuaries where dangers such as stonefish may be present)</p> <p>Ensure all equipment (e.g. flippers, inflatable devices, slides) is in good repair and used according to manufacturers' specifications</p>  |
| Managing student considerations | <p>Assess students' ability to swim at the specific location. If non-swimmers are involved in the activity, ensure appropriate supervision and risk mitigation strategies are in place</p> <p>Have all students wear easily identifiable clothing to assist with identification in the water (e.g. brightly coloured rash vests, sun shirts or bibs). Consider high-visibility wrist bands for medically at-risk students (asthma, anaphylaxis, epilepsy) as appropriate</p> <p>Advise students about the dangers of diving/jumping into the water relevant to the swimming location</p> |

## During the activity

| Hazards                              | Control measures   |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Considering environmental conditions | Cease activities when conditions tend towards unfavourable (e.g. impending storm, rips, extreme heat) or where environmental warnings have been issued (e.g. beaches have been closed by lifeguards) |
| Managing student considerations      | <p>Continuously monitor students for signs of fatigue and exhaustion</p> <p>Conduct safety checks (e.g. a buddy system or roll checks) during the activity</p>                                       |

## After the activity

| Hazards | Control measures  |
|---------|---|
|         | Implement procedures (e.g. roll marking mechanisms) for students leaving the location |

## Additional links

Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers' Association (<http://www.ascta.com/>)

Provision of Learn to Swim programs (</about-us/budgets-funding-grants/grants/state-schools/core-funding/learn-to-swim>)

*Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act 2011 (Qld)* (<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2011-019>)

Surf Life Saving Australia (<https://sls.com.au/>)

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