

Good Club Guide for a Team Manager

Welcome

You have either been appointed, or are considering, a role as a Team Manager.

We wish you a fulfilling and enjoyable experience in your role. We greatly appreciate the time and commitment that you are giving to support the development of aquatics.

How this resource will help you

This resource is intended to assist you in your role by providing:

- A guide to your roles and responsibilities as a Team Manager.
- Top tips and good practice advice from experienced volunteers.
- Useful links and information about additional learning opportunities.

Role of the Team Manager

The Team Manager is vital to the wellbeing and success of any team and the rewards can be invaluable. It is the Team Manager who ensures the smooth running of aquatic activities away from the club's home pool.

Duties of the Team Manager

- To be responsible for the administration and coordination of aquatic teams.
- To uphold the principles and policies of the ASA.
- To provide a central point of contact for the team.
- To be responsible for the safeguarding and wellbeing of athletes and staff.
- To attend pre-competition/camp briefings as required.
- To arrange all team travel, itineraries and accommodation as required.
- To provide information to athletes, coaches, parents/guardians as appropriate.
- To undertake team selections as appropriate and in consultation with others.
- To ensure athletes arrive at the appropriate time and place when attending away fixtures and events.
- To be responsible on behalf of the team for any protests lodged during a competition.
- To organise team kit as appropriate.
- To prepare and submit results to the Press Officer/Media Representative as appropriate.
- To promote positive team spirit and behaviours.
- To prepare post-competition/event reports as appropriate.

Skills and qualities required

- Enthusiastic with a good knowledge of the club and athletes.
- Be well organised and efficient.
- Be an excellent communicator.
- Be understanding and impartial.
- Have the ability to maintain confidentiality.
- Have the ability to make decisions based upon the best interests of individuals and teams.
- Have the ability to work on own initiative.
- Have the ability to remain calm in difficult situations.
- Have an understanding of IT including use of word processing, databases and spreadsheets

Level of commitment required

This will vary depending on the nature of the competition/event but would involve planning and preparation in advance and attendance at the competition/event as appropriate.

Term of office

The term of office will vary from club to club. You should establish the expectations before taking on the role.

Getting started

The key to being an effective Team Manager is to be prepared and to plan ahead for a competition or event. Areas that a Team Manager will need to have considered in advance of a competition or event are shown in the Team Manager checklist.

Top tips for being an effective Team Manager

The skills required to be an effective Team Manager mainly includes the ability to be flexible and adaptable, to remain calm at all times, and most of all to be people-friendly. Here are some top tips:

1. Welfare is the number one priority for a Team Manager

As a Team Manager, you need to know where your athletes are, all of the time, and ensure you are familiar with the ASA policies on child protection found in Wavepower. The NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) have a number of useful resources which you may find of benefit; you will find a link below in the useful links section.

2. Keep a diary to record incidents

No matter how small an issue is, keep a personal diary of the occurrence. Accidents should also be recorded in a team accident book, and the accident book for the hotel/venue the accident takes place in. You will need a record of the incident should you receive any enquiries at a later stage.

3. Integration of able-bodied and disabled athletes

Your role as Team Manager is to encourage integration wherever possible, from transportation, through to meal times and accommodation. Where possible, ensure teams travel together, sit together for meals, and are located within the same accommodation blocks or floors (where appropriate).

4. Be clear and consistent with instructions

Manage your staff and delegate work where appropriate – you cannot do everything on your own.

5. Establish protocols with the team

This is part of agreeing behaviours and standards. To ensure wellbeing and respect between athletes and the team, establish and agree protocols on codes of conduct, athletes' use of mobile phones, quiet time, lights out, etc. Agreeing these with the team allows the athletes and team members to contribute to and take ownership of the decisions they make.

6. Know the doping procedures for the sport

Should an athlete be required for a doping test, it reassures any athlete to know that you are familiar with the protocol and processes involved. Information is available on the British Swimming website.

7. Try to speak to every athlete

This will be easier with a small team, and more challenging with a larger team, but try to ensure you have a conversation with each athlete at least once a day. This may be as you are welcoming athletes arriving at the bus to travel to an event, or during meal times at an overnight competition. As a Team Manager with responsibility for the welfare of athletes, it helps to have an awareness of the athlete's behaviour and state of mind. Encourage a 'buddy' system among the athletes, where athletes look out for and support each other.

8. Be prepared for anything

Ensure you are aware of any athletes' birthdays whilst you are away or at an event and plan accordingly with team birthday cards, cakes etc. Also be prepared for what you would do in the event of death, illness of a family member back home, an athlete forgetting to bring medication, home sickness, exam results, etc. The more you plan and pre-empt how you may deal with certain situations, the better prepared you will be should the unexpected happen.

9. Know the technical laws of the sport

Similar to doping procedures, should an athlete or member of staff wish to make a protest, or if an issue arises at an event, it provides reassurance to the team, and confidence in yourself if you are familiar with the laws and processes to follow at an event.

10. Maintain a sense of humour!

A Team Manager is called upon for a number of tasks, ranging from being a travel agent or administrator, to being a medical advisor or disciplinarian. Athletes and staff may make high demands on your time. Remember to always keep calm and level-headed. Team management is like a jigsaw. Fitting all the above pieces together is the key to successful team management. Learn from any mistakes, learn from others who have been Team Managers and most importantly, enjoy the experience!

Training and development opportunities

The ASA has produced comprehensive resources and workshops for Team Manager training. We strongly encourage all Team Managers to undertake this training before carrying out this role. The training is designed to ensure that any volunteers who are taking groups of athletes to competitions or camps, locally or abroad, are fully equipped to carry out their role.

Team Manager training is delivered in two parts – Module 1 and Module 2. You must complete Module 1 and gain experience as a team manager at local competitions before moving onto Module 2.

Module 1 – Local Competitions

Module 2 – Overnight Stays and Travelling Abroad

If you would like to access the Team Manager training, please visit: www.swimming.org/volunteering or email volunteering@swimming.org.

Have you thought about sharing your knowledge and experience by becoming a Team Manager trainer? If you're interested in delivering courses and training up the next generation of Team Managers, please visit the Volunteer Engagement Hub see www.swimming.org/volunteering for more information on the process.

Moving on from your role

When it's time to move on, it's important to think about how you will ensure that all your knowledge and experience is passed on to the person taking over from you. Here are some suggestions to help ensure a smooth transition, and to ensure that the person taking over from you has the information and resources they need:

- Try to give as much notice as you can that you are moving on, in order to allow the club to recruit or elect another Team Manager.
- Where possible, try to build up or be part of a small team of Team Managers in your local area in order to share workloads, ensure others can take over when you move on and are able to offer training to new volunteers.
- Assist in developing an up-to-date role description and advert for the post based on your experience, and think of any people that may be interested.
- Think about the type of information you would like to receive if you were to volunteer for this position again, and the format you would like to receive it in, e.g. an e-mail, paper file, face-to-face handover meeting, shadowing at a competition, etc.
- Prepare an information pack for the new Team Manager to assist them in their role, including a list of any outstanding work/issues, a list of key contacts and any 'top tips' that may help.
- Hand over hard copies of any files or important correspondence and pass on any electronic information by saving it on a USB stick.
- Offer to mentor the new Team Manager in this role for an agreed period of time.

Summary

We hope you have found this guide informative. We wish you a great experience in your role and thank you once again for all the time and commitment you are giving to the sport.

swim21

swim21 is the ASA's quality mark for the development of effective, ethical and sustainable clubs. The opportunity to gain swim21 accreditation is available to all ASA affiliated clubs, across any of the aquatic disciplines, regardless of size or activity delivered. swim21 is about creating the best possible aquatic experience for all and raising the quality of aquatic provision across all areas. The swim21 programme enhances club management, strengthens the structures and unites the club with shared goals to ensure the best environment is available for all swimmers.

To find out more about swim21 and the associated benefits, please visit <http://www.swimming.org/asa/clubs-and-members/swim21-accreditation/>.

Equality and diversity

Is your club as inclusive as it could be? Does your club truly reflect the local demographics? Aquatic sports can and should be made accessible to everyone, to the greatest extent possible. Opening your club to everyone will aid with sustainability, add new dimensions to the club's social element, and you may even find talent, in many different forms, where you least expect it.

Read more about the ASA's commitment to equality and diversity and find further support for clubs at this link: www.swimming.org/asa/about-us/equality/.

Further information

The ASA accepts no liability for any errors or omissions in this resource. Further, whilst it is hoped that volunteers will find this resource useful, no liability arising out of its use can be accepted by the ASA or the club.

This resource is not a contract of employment and the role you undertake as a volunteer will not create an employment relationship between you and the club or the ASA.

ASA Volunteering Hub

Did you know that the ASA has a dedicated hub for volunteers? To access this hub, go to www.swimming.org/volunteering or email us at volunteering@swimming.org.

Acknowledgements

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Useful links

The ASA
www.swimming.org/asa

Sport England
www.sportengland.org

Child Protection in Sport Unit
www.thecpsu.org.uk