



## Qualification Specification

# STA Level 2 Award in Open Water Swimming Coaching



**CIMSPA**  
Endorsed

Professional  
Standards

Version 20.1

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## This qualification is regulated by Ofqual (England)

### STA Level 2 Award in Open Water Swimming Coaching

For the purpose of this document, STA refers to Safety Training Awards. The awarding organisation of the Swimming Teachers' Association.

Qualification number: 603/3012/0

#### Unit Structure

This qualification consists of 2 mandatory units.

Unit Title	Code	Unit Level	GLH
Planning, Coaching and Evaluating Open Water Swimming	H/616/9103	2	8
Safe Coaching Practices within Open Water Swimming	K/616/9104	2	14

GLH = Guided learning hours

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#### Total Qualification Time (TQT)

30 hours

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#### Qualification Delivery

The recommended contact hours for this qualification is 22 hours which includes direct teaching and assessing but excludes breaks. The course may be ran over 3 days, but can also be delivered over a period of weeks, with the minimum of each training session being 2 hours.

The ratio for this qualification is a maximum of 12 learners to 1 tutor.

## Introduction

Open water is the fastest growing swimming activity within the UK and more people are taking part in open water swimming events. Open water swimming coaches will be responsible for planning, coaching and evaluating open water swimming sessions in an open water environment. They will be able to coach swimmers who are new to open water through to those who are training for an open water event. Open water swimming coaches are responsible for ensuring the safety of their swimmers, the open water environment as well as the equipment used.

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## Qualification Objective

This qualification will provide the learner with the knowledge, skills and techniques of coaching open water swimming and enable them to effectively plan, deliver and evaluate open water swimming sessions. It will qualify learners to take swimmers into open water for the first time through to training for an event. Learners will only be qualified to coach in an open water environment in which they are competent and experienced in, learners will not be able to train swimmers for an event in which they are not experienced.

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## Target Learners

This qualification could appeal to open water swimmers, triathletes, swimming teachers, beach lifeguards or lake managers who have open water swimming experience and want to expand their open water knowledge or coaching portfolio and share their passion for open water swimming.

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## Progression

Once qualified learners may wish to develop their knowledge in open water further by specialising in areas of open water swimming, such as cold-water or channel / long distance coaching. These can be achieved through CPDs.

## Entry Requirements

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Hold current membership of STA
- Submit a CV of open water swimming experience
- Learners who do not hold either a swimming teaching, coaching or triathlon coaching qualification must complete the Open Water Swimming Coaching online up-skill programme.

Learners must have all pre-requisites in place before the start of the course. Qualification certificates cannot be issued if all pre-requisites are not met before the start of the course, post course submissions will not be accepted.

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## Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policies

STA have put measures in place for learners requiring additional support whilst undertaking STA courses.

For further information on these, please refer to the policies section on the Safety Training Awards website

<https://www.safetytrainingawards.co.uk/policies/>

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## Association and Awarding Organisation Policies

A full list of awarding organisation policies are available on our website: <https://www.safetytrainingawards.co.uk>

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## Assessment Format

Competent / Not competent.

## Assessment Methods

The STA Award in Open Water Swimming Coaching is tutor assessed through the completion of worksheets, session plans, session evaluation forms and practical teaching in an open water environment.

All learning outcomes and assessment criteria in the units must be achieved in order for the learner to be deemed competent and pass the course.

Worksheets are to be completed independently by each learner, with the tutor acting as the invigilator.

Incorrect or insufficient worksheet answers can be corrected or re-submitted in the notes section at the end of the worksheets. Alternatively, they can be addressed through oral supplementary questioning. All additional questions and responses must be recorded in the notes section of the worksheets.

All practical tasks must be performed independently by the learner without prompting by the tutor.

Please refer to the STA Award in Open Water Swimming Coaching assessment guidance document for the detailed assessment process.

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## Re-Assessment

If a learner is unsuccessful in the end of course assessment, then the learner is only required to re-sit the required element i.e. if a learner fails the theory element they are only required to re-sit the theory assessment. The re-take of a theory assessment or a practical assessment must be completed within six weeks from the failure date.

## Tutor / Assessor Requirements

All tutors must have the skills, knowledge, and experience to be able to teach and demonstrate the subject.

Each tutor must be approved by Safety Training Awards and provide evidence of:

1. STA Award in Open Water Swimming Coaching or acceptable equivalent
  2. Hold or working towards a formal tutoring and assessing qualification
  3. Maintaining their technical competence within the subject area and provide evidence of continuing professional development (CPD).
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## IQA Requirements

Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) of this qualification must have knowledge and competency in internal quality assurance.

An IQA must hold:

1. Hold the STA Award in Open Water Swimming Coaching or acceptable equivalent
2. Attend a STA IQA training day or hold a recognised internal quality assurance qualification.

Note: IQAs cannot quality assure a course for which they were a learner, the tutor and / or assessor.

## Resource Requirements

Course resources:

- STA Open Water Swimming Coaching Resource Manual – Each learner is required to have their own copy of the resource manual to have access to theoretical knowledge of the qualification.
- In order to fulfil the practical requirements of this qualification, access to an appropriate open water swimming facility / venue is required each day of the course. The facility should meet the required temperature and depth requirements. The course tutor must perform a risk assessment of the venue.

Venue:

- Room size: Adequate space for all learners on the course to undertake theory and practical work
- Seats: One per learner
- Writing surfaces - Adequate for each learner to make notes
- Toilets: Separate facilities for male and female learners
- Ventilation: Should be adequate
- Lighting: Should be suitable for reading, combining a mixture of natural and artificial light
- Heating: Should maintain a 'short sleeve' environment, minimum temperature 16°C
- Access / exits: Should be safe, well lit and cater for people with additional needs
- Cleanliness: Maintain a clean, tidy and hygienic environment
- Noise: Consider whether there is noise that may distract learners from training
- Electrical items: When projectors and other electrical equipment are used, the equipment must be checked to ensure it is safe working order. It is important to be aware of trip hazards associated with electric cables in order to reduce such risks.

Location: Where possible the lecture venue should be in close proximity to the open water venue.

## Unit Specification

Unit Title	Planning, Coaching, and Evaluating Open Water Swimming	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
1. Understand the role of an open water swimming coach	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5	Identify the role of an open water swimming coach Identify qualities of an effective open water coach Describe the principles of coaching Identify possible barriers to learning Describe how these barriers can be broken down
2. Understand the principles of planning an open water swimming coaching session	2.1 2.2 2.3	Describe the importance of planning Identify planning consideration for open water swimming coaching Describe the components of a session plan
3. Be able to develop session plans for open water swimmers	3.1 3.2 3.3	Develop a session plan for a novice swimmer new to open water Develop a session plan for an intermediate swimmer developing front crawl Develop a session plan for an experienced swimmer training for an event
4. Understand the importance of evaluation	4.1 4.2 4.3	Perform a session evaluation Describe the importance of coach evaluations Describe the importance of swimmer evaluations
5. Be able to coach open swimming strokes	5.1	Demonstrate coaching progressive practices for open water swimming strokes
6. Be able to coach open water swimming skills	6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4 6.5 6.6 6.7 6.8 6.9	Demonstrate coaching stretching and mobility exercises Demonstrate coaching safe entries and exits Demonstrate coaching acclimation skills Demonstrate coaching open water sighting Demonstrate coaching open water turns Demonstrate coaching pack swimming skills Demonstrate coaching deep water starts Demonstrate coaching goggle adjustments Demonstrate coaching post swim aftercare



## Unit Specification

Unit Title	Safe Coaching Practices within Open Water Swimming	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
1. Understand the legislation requirements for open water swimming coaching	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4	Identify relevant legislation for open water swimming coaching Explain how an open water swimming coach will ensure a duty of care to open water swimmers during a session Identify headings which are covered with a Normal Action Plan Identify headings which are covered with an Emergency Action Plan
2. Be able to complete a risk assessment for an open water venue	2.1	Perform a risk assessment on an open water venue
3. Understand the different considerations for open water venues	3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4	Describe the different characteristics of open water types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lakes</li> <li>• Sea</li> <li>• Rivers</li> </ul> Describe how different types of weather conditions can affect open water swimming coaching Describe how different types of water conditions can affect open water swimming coaching Explain how a session would need to be adapted due to weather conditions
4. Understand the effects of temperature on the human body while immersed in water	4.1 4.2	Describe the dangerous effects of temperature changes on the body when immersed in water Describe the benefits of the 'warm up' in swimming
5. Understand the equipment requirements of open water swimming	5.1 5.2 5.3	Identify the types of equipment used in open water swimming Describe how to put on a wetsuit Describe how to remove a wetsuit