

National Pool Lifeguard Award

AIM: The aim of the WSI National Pool Lifeguard Award is to enable a Candidate to act as a designated lifeguard, trained in Pool Rescue and Basic Life Support techniques. The candidate will also have an awareness of First Aid and Pool Water Analysis.

Entry Level

Preferred Entry Level

Rescue 2 Award of Water Safety Ireland

Minimum Standard Entry Level

- Be able to swim 100 metres on front (prone) and 100 metres on back (supine).
- Be able to swim 50 metres (prone) within 60 seconds (1 Minute)
- Be able to surface dive and recover an object from the deepest part of the pool.
- Be 16 years of age, or older, at the time of the examination.
- Pay the requisite registration fee to WSI.

Specification

The specification for the qualification is:

Unit 1 Basic Life Support 1,2 and 3

Unit 2 Lifeguard Skills

Unit 3 Pool Operations

National Pool Lifeguard Certification is awarded at either of two levels.

Level 1 certificates are awarded to those who are judged to be competent to supervise swimming pools or sections of a swimming facility, where the water depth does not exceed 1.5m.

Level 2 certificates are awarded to those who are judged to be competent to supervise areas of water in a swimming facility where depths are greater than 1.5m.

Candidates can upgrade from a Level 1 to a Level 2 award during the validity period of the Level 1 award. Candidates undertaking such an upgrade do not have to complete the entire course.

Optional modules are available from WSI e.g. Disability Teaching and Pool Plant Operator Certificate. Holders of the WSI National Pool Lifeguard Award are strongly encouraged to undertake further training.

Specific Learning Outcomes

Unit 1 Basic Life Support

The Candidate should be able to:

- Complete the relevant worksheets to an acceptable standard
- Outline the functions of the respiratory system
- Identify and outline the role of muscles involved in inspiration and expiration
- Describe the process of exchange of gases in the alveoli
- Explain the role of the circulatory and nervous systems in the control of breathing
- Explain the following terms: tidal volume, inspiratory reserve volume, expiratory reserve volume, vital capacity and residual volume
- Identify the four main components of the circulatory system
- Describe the cardiac cycle
- Describe the heart and its associated blood vessels
- Outline the flow of blood through the main vessels of the body
- Explain the following terms: pulse, cardiac output and blood pressure
- Describe the composition of blood and the function of its particles
- Recognise the symptoms of Respiratory Failure
- Recognise Cardiac Arrest
- Demonstrate Basic Life Support (CPR with BVM and AED)
- Demonstrate Oxygen Administration.

Demonstrate

- Establishing an airway
- Turning a subject
- Mouth to mouth and mouth to nose resuscitation on adult, child or infant
- Effective skills to administer CPR with 1 operator on adult, child or infant
- Removal of visible obstructions
- Action for vomiting
- Aftercare to include recovery position
- Techniques for the relief of airway obstruction for conscious/unconscious subjects
- Techniques for the relief of airway obstruction while dealing with subjects, who are pregnant or obese
- BLS in two-operator mode
- Demonstrate rescue breaths using a BVM
- AED operation.
- Oxygen Administration

Unit 2 Lifeguard Skills – Level 2

The Candidate should be able to:

- Demonstrate land-based rescues
- Demonstrate non-contact rescues
- Demonstrate evasive and defensive technique
- Demonstrate appropriate contact rescues.
- Demonstrate appropriate releases from Drowning Grips (WSI Rescue 2)
- Demonstrate methods of towing a subject to safety
- Demonstrate deep water resuscitation
- Explain the principles of assisting a conscious subject out of the pool.
- Demonstrate techniques for spinal injury management including stabilising, boarding and landing
- Describe and demonstrate the use of rescue equipment in pool emergency situations e.g. ring buoys, reaching poles, etc.
- Describe how rescue equipment should be maintained and stored

*** Those undertaking a Level 1 qualification are also required to demonstrate the above skills, but the techniques may be demonstrated in shallow water. Shallow water resuscitation must also be demonstrated.**

Unit 3 Pool Operations

The Candidate should be able to:

- Identify the procedures involved in a Normal Operational Plan (NOP) including:
 - » The number, location and function of the lifeguards; pool zoning;
 - » the patrol system and safety checks
 - » Maintaining safe water conditions (including water tests)
 - » An awareness of pool water treatment and testing
 - Identify the procedures involved in an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) including:
 - » Evacuation
 - » Principles of first aid
 - » Reporting and documenting of incidents
 - Use appropriate communication techniques with colleagues and the general public in normal and emergency situations – oral, written and aural
 - Use observation techniques to ensure the safety of all pool users
 - Identify an appropriate course of action to avert dangerous situations in the pool and its surrounds
 - Outline the safety requirements for groups using specialist equipment e.g. sub-aqua, canoe polo, aqua aerobics, water polo
 - Outline the safety requirements for groups with special needs e.g. disabled, elderly, children
 - Successfully complete a simulated accident situation as outlined by the Examiner. (This may also include lifeguarding skills as outlined above.)
- * Level 1 Candidates can be examined in this section in water depths of 1.5m or less. Level 2 Candidates and those upgrading from Level 1 to Level 2 must perform the above in water depths of at least 2m.**

Course Category Options

Three possible options may apply:

- A. Course organised by the WSI Water Safety Area Committee
- B. Course organised by an WSI approved Tutor.
- C. Course may be organised by an WSI approved Organisation.

In all cases the following are the responsibility of the organiser:

- a. Hire of swimming pool
- b. Hire of lecture hall
- c. Insurance cover
- d. Provision of equipment
- e. Application for and payment to Examiners

Course Registration

All National Pool Lifeguard Courses must be registered with:

Water Safety Ireland
The Long Walk Galway
Telephone: 091-564400
E-mail: info@watersafety.ie
Website: www.watersafety.ie

The National Pool Lifeguard Course Registration Form must be completed and returned at least fourteen days prior to the commencement of the course. The Course Organiser must inform the Secretary of the Local Area Committee of the Course details.

Tutors will be invoiced for the appropriate amount by WSI HQ at the current rate per Candidate.

Minimum Training Hours

The minimum course length for Candidates preparing for assessment is 30 hours.

It is acknowledged however that the current ability of Candidates will be a determining factor in calculating the actual training hours required.

It may take a considerably longer period of training to bring some Candidates to the standard required, especially where they have had no prior Lifesaving Instruction.

It is the responsibility of the Course Tutor to ensure that all Candidates are prepared for the final assessment.

Each Candidate must have an 80% attendance on the Course in order to take the final Assessment.

Assessment

The National Pool Lifeguard Award Assessment is made up of 4 units.

1. BLS Practical
2. Lifeguard Skills Practical
3. Pool Operation Skills Practical
4. Completion of Course Manual Worksheets (MCQ for Revalidations)

Only WSI qualified Examiners who are also WSI Pool Lifeguard Tutors may examine units 1, 2 and 3 of the Award. The Course Tutor corrects the worksheets which must be available for inspection by the Course Examiner, if requested.

The ratio of Tutor/Examiner to Candidates shall be max of 1:16.

All Organisers must include the name of the intended Examiner(s) on the Registration Form. An updated register of Examiners/Tutors will be kept by WSI HQ.

Format

Unit 1 BLS:

The practical skills of BLS must be demonstrated in simulated exercises with another candidate and using training manikins. CPR must be demonstrated on manikins only. (As per CFR Skills Evaluation Sheet)

Candidates should be suitably attired and present themselves in pairs for the examination of single operator skills and in groups of three for two operator skills.

Candidates must be able to answer BLS theoretical questions posed by the Examiner. Suitable scenarios will be set by the Examiner.

Unit 2 Lifeguard Skills:

These practical skills should be carried out in simulated drowning/rescue situations at suitable indoor or outdoor swimming pools. These scenarios may include elements of swimming pool operations.

Unit 3. Pool Operations skills:

The Emergency Incident Scenario

The Examiner should set the scenario, while the Candidates are in isolation. A brief outline should be given to the Candidates before the start of each scenario.

The Examiner should always maintain control over the condition of the victims and incident details. Candidates should be informed of changing conditions.

The Examiner should indicate the start and completion of the incident (minimum 3 minutes, maximum 5 minutes). Face down or submerged subjects should be assumed unconscious and not breathing.

Acting as an individual Lifeguard or as part of a team, the Candidate should initiate appropriate procedures, to prevent, and/or rescue and provide aftercare for subjects from a previously unknown simulated emergency situation.

Subjects can either be non-swimmer(s), weak swimmer(s), injured swimmer(s) or unconscious.

Note: Sample assessment forms for Units 1 and 2 can be found in Chapter 15 of the WSI National Pool Lifeguard manual.

Rescue sequence:

1. Observe pool, by patrolling or watching.
2. Prevent, if possible, an emergency situation developing.
3. Spot the subjects and assess the situation.
4. Ensure the safety of others
5. Initiate the emergency action plan.
6. Perform the rescue/s.
7. Assist the conscious subject from the pool.
8. Provide aftercare.

Sample emergency situations to simulate:

1. Swimmer in the middle of the pool becomes incapacitated with cramp in the foot.
2. Non-swimmer falls in at the deep end.
3. Weak swimmer paddles out of their depth and panics.
4. Non-swimmer attempts to move along the pool edge towards the deep end, loses contact with side and panics.
5. A weak swimmer, out of their depth, becomes exhausted and sinks.
6. A swimmer becomes entrapped by the steps / handrail or other pool furniture.
7. A swimmer collides with the side or another swimmer and is knocked unconscious.
8. A swimmer chokes on the water and panics.
9. A swimmer has a fit in the middle of the pool.
10. A swimmer jumps in and suffers a suspected spinal injury.
11. A swimmer dives in and suffers a suspected spinal injury.
12. A pool user has a heart attack.
13. A weak swimmer panics and grabs another swimmer for support.
14. Collapsed subject on bank of pool.
15. Panicking onlooker on bank of pool.

Combining two or more of the above will provide many other situations. The aim is to have a preventable situation with one that is not, to test Lifeguard observation skills and procedural knowledge. Water depths must be appropriate for Level 1 and Level 2 awards.

Unit 4. Worksheet completion

Worksheets serve as a checklist for both Candidate and Tutor and must be available for scrutiny by the Examiner.

Results

Candidates must achieve a pass (50%) in each technique of BLS (Unit 1), Water Work (Unit 2+3) and must also achieve a pass (50%) in the work sheet completion (Unit 4).

Candidates who fail the Level 2 award may be awarded a Level 1 qualification, subject to completing the outstanding items on the Level 1 assessment form e.g. shallow water resuscitation, etc. This process is also subject to the Candidate having been successful in the other units.

Note: A sample results summary sheet is available in Chapter 15 of the WSI National Pool Lifeguard Manual.

Repeat Examinations

Candidates may repeat the examination in whole or in part within a period of 6 months. This repeat examination may take place in an area other than where the original examination took place. Candidates should apply in writing to the Area Committee where an examination is taking place for permission to participate. Candidates must provide proof to that Area Committee that they have completed a National Pool Lifeguard Course.

Appeals

All Candidates undertaking the WSI National Pool Lifeguard Award have the right to appeal if they are in any way dissatisfied with the assessment result. The appeals procedure, along with all relevant forms, can be found in Chapter 19 of the WSI National Pool Lifeguard Manual.

Revalidating

All revalidating Candidates must provide a copy of their last Pool Lifeguard Certificate to Course Tutor/Examiner prior to assessment.

All WSI revalidating Lifeguards must produce their CPD Log or undergo whatever training their Tutor deems necessary prior to Revalidation Exam and MCQ

All ILSE equivalent candidate from other organisations revalidating with WSI must complete the WSI Lifeguard Manual Worksheets and Revalidation Course prior to Revalidation Exam

Candidates must achieve a mark of 70% or higher in the Multiple Choice Question Papers (MCQs)

A minimum of 4 hours is required for the Lifeguard Revalidation courses (Pool, Beach, Inland). This duration, may include the assessment, MCQ, BLS, and in-water practical work.

Any Level 1 Lifeguard can upgrade to a Level 2 award as long as they are still valid within the 2 year period through a revalidation.