

Safeguarding lives, on and near water



RLSS UK National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ) NPLQ Overview

The RLSS UK National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ) is the most awarded lifeguard qualification in the United Kingdom and Ireland that complies with the industry guidance contained within the HSE publication 'Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools' Generally, the NPLQ is a recruitment requirement for a number of jobs from Pool Lifeguard to Centre Manager. On successful completion of the course you will be fully qualified to work as a Pool Lifeguard.

The RLSS UK NPLQ is not just a qualification it can be a stepping stone into a career within the leisure industry.

The NPLQ and associated courses are administered by IQL UK Ltd, a trading subsidiary of the Royal Life Saving Society.

The NPLQ course duration is 36 hours with an optional bolt on element of Automated External Defibrillation which is 1.5 hours.

The course comprises of physical training and theoretical classroom work, followed by a practical in-water and out-of-water assessment on pool rescue, first aid, CPR and lifesaving skills.

The qualification is internationally recognised and is incorporated on the Qualifications Framework at Level 2. The NPLQ is valid for 2 years from the date of issue and a further 20 hours of ongoing training and competency assessment must be completed before a lifeguard can renew their qualification prior to the expiry of their existing award.

Benefits of becoming a lifeguard

We think there are loads of great reasons why you'd want to become a lifeguard and we guess you must think it's a pretty good idea too, which is why you are here...

Reasons why we think you'd love it...

- First and foremost you are providing an amazing public service. You will without a doubt make people feel confident, happier and safer just by being on the poolside and you could potentially save a life.
- Being a lifeguard offers a fantastic foundation to a career in the leisure industry. Many senior managers began their rise to leisure stardom by lifeguarding at their local pools.
- The opportunity to get fit. Not only will you have to have a basic level of fitness to become a lifeguard but you will be encouraged to stay fit and get fitter. Many pools will give their lifeguards discounted or even free memberships.

- You get to work with a team of like minded people, so there's plenty of opportunity to increase your social circle!
- The hours are flexible and perfect for those of you who need to fit studying into your busy days.
- If you're a competitive type there is plenty of opportunity to show off your lifeguarding talents in annual events such as the National Pool Lifeguard Championships (team event) and the Lifeguard Triathlon.
- If you find you really enjoy lifeguarding you can take it up as a competitive sport and compete regularly for your local club.
- Lastly but still very importantly, you will gain a life skill that will come in handy for the rest of your life that could lead to enhanced career progression and a stepping stone to the National Pool Management Qualification (NPMQ).

RLSS UK NPLQ Course Content

Pre Requisites

Every candidate, prior to commencement of training for the NPLQ must:

- Be 16 years of age at the time of taking the NPLQ assessment;
- Be able to meet the following basic fitness criteria:-
- Jump / dive into deep water
- Swim 50 metres in less than 60 seconds
- Swim 100 metres continuously on front and back in deep water.
- Tread water for 30 seconds
- Surface dive to the floor of the pool
- Climb out unaided without ladder / steps and where the pool design permits

Content

Training and assessment for the NPLQ is in three sections and all must be successfully passed to attain the NPLQ.

Section 1 - The Lifeguard and the Law, Swimming Pool Supervision

Element 1 - The Lifeguard and the Law

Element 2 - Swimming Pool, Hazards and Control Measures

Element 3 - Swimming Pool Supervision

Section 2 - Intervention and Rescue and Emergency Action Plans

Element 1 - Intervention and Rescue

Element 2 - Rescue of a Casualty with a Suspected Spinal Injury

Element 3 - Emergency Action Plan

Section 3 - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, AED, and First Aid

Element 1 - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

Element 2 - Automated External Defibrillation (AED)

Element 2 - First Aid

Element 2 of Section 3 can include an optional bolt of AED on to the qualification.

RLSS UK NPLQ Course Assessment

Assessment for the NPLQ takes place at the conclusion of a training course for a minimum of 36 hours for new candidates. It determines your knowledge and understanding of the principles of working as a pool lifeguard. The assessment will also determine your ability to apply the skills and knowledge in a work-related environment as they would apply in a swimming pool. Your ability is assessed in a range of lifeguarding skills which enable you to deal with common emergency situations in pools.

The Unit 1 assessment is in four parts:

- Practical pool assessment
- Theory assessment
- First aid assessment
- CPR assessment

All sections of the NPLQ must be successfully assessed within a 28 day period, and for renewal candidates, within the period of validity of your existing qualification.

Renewal of the RLSS UK NPLQ

Renewal candidates may renew their qualification only within the period of validity of their existing qualification as stated on the insignia.

Candidates must meet the following on-going training criteria before being submitted for a renewal assessment:

- Provide written evidence of having completed a minimum 20 hours lifesaving, CPR, first aid and competency assessment in conjunction with the undertaking of lifeguard duties within the period of validity of the qualification
- Hold a current full National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ)
- Have access to a copy of "The Lifeguard", available from Lifesavers Direct.
- Where lifeguards undertake their activities as part of a club or other voluntary group, the same criteria must be applied in order to ensure a consistent standards within the constraints of their reduced responsibilities.

Approved Prior Learning (APL)

In some circumstances, candidates may be able to show evidence of prior achievement. In such circumstances, training times may be able to be reduced in situations where this would not create disruption to a course programme by disadvantaging other candidates; for example, where the number of candidates remaining for a part of the courses is too small to make the delivery of effective training possible.

Exemptions may apply to holders of the following awards and qualifications (guided learning time credits are shown in brackets):

- Current RLSS UK National Beach Lifeguard Qualification (NBLQ) [12 hours];
- Current RLSS UK Bronze Medallion or higher award [12 hours];
- Current HSE Approved First Aid at Work Certificate or Occupational First Aid Certificate [9 hours];
- Current RLSS UK Life Support 3 Award or equivalent [3 hours];
- Current STA NARS [PL] Qualification [12 hours].

Where candidates wish to claim a training exemption, they **MUST** provide course trainers with original qualifications (photocopies **WILL NOT** be accepted) prior to the start of the course. Trainers, when planning courses, should alert potential candidates to the exemption scheme in course promotional materials.

A maximum of 12 hours accreditation for prior learning may be claimed.

RLSS UK NPLQ Course Booking and Charges

NPLQ Course

Booking an NPLQ Course

All bookings are administered by the Leisure Centre (Approved Training Centre) which is delivering the course. If you would like to become an Approved Training Centre please email, mail@iql.org.uk

Individual Bookings and Course Charges

The fee per candidate varies depending on the course location and the training provider. Our research tells us that course fees vary between £150 - £250. However, funding is available for the NPLQ.

As an individual booking an NPLQ course please visit our interactive map, insert your postcode and select a course that is nearest to you or most convenient for you, it's as simple as that.

Once you have found the course that you wish to join, you then simply need to follow the instructions on screen to contact the training provider that is organising the course. If you are having trouble booking on to a course in your area please contact us and we will do our best to source a course for you.

Course Documentation

 [NPLQ 8th Edition Order Form \(116.34 kB\)](#)

Guidance and Syllabus for Pool Lifeguard Trainer Assessors (Red Stripe)

This booklet has been designed to assist RLSS UK Pool Lifeguard Trainer Assessors to plan, deliver or assess candidates for the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification. The booklet addresses training and candidate requirements, course organisation and evaluation, record keeping, assessment organisation, procedures and assessment criteria.

Approved Training Centre Manual (Orange Stripe)

This manual has been designed to provide Centre Co-ordinators, Internal Verifiers and Pool Trainer Assessors with sufficient information to organise and deliver training and candidate assessment for the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ). The manual will be subject to a regular review to ensure that it reflects the manner in which the Approved Training Centre (ATC) scheme develops and where necessary amendments will be made.

The Lifeguard

This is a comprehensive training resource for the RLSS UK NPLQ. We have brought together a wealth of materials to ensure that you are trained to the highest level. The Lifeguard covers all aspects of general lifeguard training as well as site specific issues.

Funding

The NPLQ - Level 2 Certificate in Swimming Pool Supervision & Rescue is currently approved for funding, however the level of funding is dependent on the individual candidates age and/or circumstances. Funding is only available where the NPLQ course is being provided by an Approved Training Centre (Training Provider) that has been approved by the relevant government agency to deliver such funded training and has an existing funding contract in place with either the Skills Funding Agency or the Young Persons Learning Agency. The trainer provider may be delivering the NPLQ course in partnership with a college or similar organisation that is ultimately the funding contract holder.

Full guidance and details of such funding is available from the [Skills Funding Agency](#) and [Young People's Learning Agency](#) with more specific guidance also available on the [Learning Aims Database \(LAD\)](#). On the (LAD), the NPLQ is called the "Award in Pool Lifeguarding, Supervision and Rescue (QCF)" and the LAD reference number is 60012067.

Any agreement to funded (in part or full) provision must have been confirmed in writing by your NPLQ training provider and/or the relevant government funding agency or their contract holder prior to commencement on the NPLQ course.

Certification

Completed assessment reports will be forwarded to IQL for processing. A carbon copy of the Assessment Report Form will be retained by the candidate as proof of successfully gaining the award. IQL will despatch, by normal post, the NPLQ certificate to the candidate's home address.

The validity period of the award is two years from the date of the assessment.

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