

# THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE: MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

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## **Introduction**

The Amateur Swimming Association, along with many other Governing Bodies, are actively trying to recruit more young people into becoming volunteers.

Nationwide initiatives, such as the Youth Sport Trust 'Step into Sport' programme, provide aquatic sports (and clubs in particular) with an excellent opportunity to tap into the ever increasing number of young people who are developing their leadership skills within schools. During 2006 6,000 young people aged between 16 – 19yrs committed to undertaking 50 – 200 hours of volunteering as part of the Step into Sport programme.

To support this development, the ASA have developed a leadership/volunteering award, called the Young Aquatic Organiser Award (YAOA), aimed at young people between the ages of 14 – 18 years.

The award introduces young people to the idea of volunteering within an aquatics club, and equips them with the skills and qualities required to be effective volunteers within all of the disciplines governed by the ASA.

The intention is that the young person will have a positive experience of the sport and:

- Continue their volunteering within swimming and/or its associated disciplines
- Continue their personal development in swimming by taking further teaching/coaching/officiating qualifications
- Develop personally and professionally from their involvement as a volunteer

## The ASA Young Aquatic Organiser Award

The ASA Young Aquatic Organiser Award (YAOA) is aimed at those who are developing their leadership and coaching skills and wish to become involved in either the administration, officiating, teaching and/or coaching of aquatic activities. It is an ideal bolt on award for young people following vocational sport qualifications at school or college. The award is a 10-hour course that specifically aims to:

- Give young people, between the ages of 14 – 18 years, an insight in the organisation of the ASA and clubs that fall within its jurisdiction
- Equip candidates with the skills to help plan, deliver and evaluate the running of an aquatic event
- Give candidates the opportunity to volunteer within an ASA accredited Swim21 club
- Encourage candidates to develop their teaching/coaching/volunteering skills within the aquatic sports

Whilst on the programme the candidates cover 6 units. They are:

- Unit 1 - The structure and organisation of the ASA and clubs within the ASA
- Unit 2 - The skills required of an Aquatic Organiser
- Unit 3 - Planning for an Aquatic event
- Unit 4 - Delivery of an Aquatic event
- Unit 5 - Evaluation of an Aquatic event
- Unit 6 - Voluntary work in an aquatic club

Candidates are provided with a workbook to complete and keep as evidence of their development during and after the course.

Course Presenters must be approved by the ASA Education and Awarding Body using the criteria provided in the syllabus.

An integral part of the course is the **Unit 6 – Voluntary Work in an Aquatic Club**, and this is where we would like your help!

## **The Benefits of having Young Volunteers in your Club**

There are two types of young volunteer...the ones that are swimmers in your club already and show a desire to get involved in helping or coaching, and the others who may not be swimmers (or from an aquatic background) but are studying sport at school or college and see volunteering as a good way to enhance their CV (and future job prospects).

Although the first type of volunteer may have more longevity in the sport, the latter can also add to the club in many ways. Some of the benefits of having either (or both) in your club are that they:

- Can bring energy and enthusiasm to the club
- May bring new ideas and skills – such as IT, website skills etc.
- Are often able to relate to other young people in the club and reflect their needs
- May attract other young people into the club (as volunteers)
- Are an extra pair of hands – especially useful during busy periods or during special events

There are also numerous benefits for the young volunteers as well. An enjoyable and productive placement can:

- Help develop their citizenship skills
- Aid their personal and social development
- Help improve their confidence
- Give them a sense of pride and belonging

## **Integrating a Young Volunteer into your Club**

Whether the young volunteer is already in your club, and is familiar with many of the club personnel, or is coming into the club for the first time, the principles for ensuring their experience with you is enjoyable and effective are the same.

Listed below are some hints and tips to get the most out of your young volunteer:

### **Nominated Point of Contact**

Make sure someone in the club (maybe the Volunteer Co-ordinator) is nominated to be the main point of contact for the young person during their time with the club. This will ensure:

- That the young person knows who to go to if there are any issues during the placement
- Club personnel know who to go to if *they* have any issues with the placement whilst they are at the club
- Any external contacts i.e. school supervisor or YAOA Presenter know who to contact to discuss progress or to help deal with any problems

The young volunteer will need to know (in advance of their placement starting):

- The contacts name
- The contacts role within the club
- A phone number for the contact

In return the club contact will need to know:

- The volunteers name
- The volunteer's school supervisor or YAOA tutor's contact name
- Phone numbers for both the volunteer and their school supervisor/presenter

**See Appendix 1 for contact pro-forma**

## **Programme of Activity**

It is crucial for the young volunteer to have a timetable and outline of the activities they will be expected to get involved with during their time with the club, so that they can prepare effectively. Even if the placement is only for the minimum of 3 hours they should know:

- What dates and times they are required
- Who they will be working with
- What their role will be
- What, if any, equipment they need to bring
- What they are expected to wear
- Who they should report to on each occasion
- Where they should report to

This may seem a bit laborious, but it will be time well spent, as the old coaching adage goes...

**Prior Planning and Preparation Prevents Poor Performance**

**See Appendix 2 for programme of activity pro-forma**

## Getting the Best Out of Your Young Volunteer

When the young person is ready to undertake their club placement they will already have been involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of some form of aquatic event. For example, this could have been:

- A school swimming gala
- A School Sport Partnership swimming festival
- A come and try it event with a local authority etc.
- A fun session in a club

What the club needs to bear in mind is that the young volunteer will still be relatively inexperienced and therefore need support during their time with you.

However, it is equally important that the young volunteer is asked to contribute in a positive way to club activity, such as helping:

- ✓ Support a lane coach
- ✓ With an experienced swimming teacher on a learn to swim programme
- ✓ Record swimmers' times during time trials
- ✓ With roles at a club gala
- ✓ Up-date or design the club's website

**It is recommended that the club and volunteer meet before the placement start so that both parties are happy and comfortable with the tasks the volunteer is being asked to help with.**

As with any new member of the club, the young volunteer will:

- Need meeting on their first night and introducing to key club personnel
- Need to be introduced to the swimmers they will be working with
- Need to be de-briefed at the end of their sessions to make sure everything is ok

## **Recording their Performance**

The young volunteer is required to complete a workbook as part of their assessment on the course, which is checked and signed off by the Course Presenter to confirm competency.

The club placement element of the programme is no different – the volunteer has to record their activity at the club and the club is asked to comment on their performance whilst on placement, focusing on:

### **Punctuality**

### **Dress**

### **Communication skills**

### **Enthusiasm**

### **Customer care skills**

It is expected that this part of the workbook will be completed by the nominated point of contact at the club and the comments *shared* with the young volunteer!

Again, the exact requirements can be found in the example workbook provided with this document.

## Summary

We hope you find this document useful. It is written in the full knowledge that the vast majority of your club activity involves working with young people and therefore you already possess the skills and knowledge to work with them effectively. However, some of the information contained should enhance both your experience and that of the young volunteer during their time with you.

If you do require any additional information please feel free to contact the ASA Volunteer Manager on [volunteering@swimming.org](mailto:volunteering@swimming.org)

Many thanks again for your support.

## Appendix 1 – Contact Details

### 1. Young Volunteer Details

Name:	
Telephone No.:	
Additional Information: e.g. best time to contact, allergies etc.	

### 2. Club Details – Nominated Point of Contact for the Young Volunteer

Name of Club:	
Contact Name:	
Role within the Club:	
Contact Telephone No.:	
Additional Information:	

### 3. Course Presenter

Name:	
Telephone No.:	
Additional Information: e.g.	

**Please ensure that the Young Volunteer, the nominated point of contact at the club and the Course Presenter have a copy of this form.**

## Appendix 2 – Programme of Activity

Day/Date	Time	Main Duties	Supervisor/Point of contact
<i>Monday 7 December 2007</i>	<i>6.30 - 7.30pm</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Help set up lane ropes</i></li> <li>• <i>Get equipment out for learner group (armbands &amp; floats)</i></li> <li>• <i>Support teacher with new learner group</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Report to xxxxxx on arrival – 6.20pm please!</i></li> <li>• <i>Working with xxxxxx during the session</i></li> </ul>