



Club Handbook Guide

Introduction

This guide should be used in conjunction with the club handbook template to assist you with forming your own club handbook. Essential policies and procedures are mentioned in the template which every club should adopt to ensure good governance of their club.

A club handbook is a set of the day to day rules and guidelines that are necessary to ensure the successful running of an aquatics club. The handbook is used in conjunction with the club constitution to ensure good governance of the club. All members should be provided with a copy of the handbook upon joining and clubs should also make their handbook available on club website for members to view.

How is a handbook different to a constitution?

A constitution is the foundation of governance for a club and covers the duties of management committees, Swim Ireland policies and procedures, and legal rights and obligations that each club is bound by.

A club handbook is a guide for members of how their club is managed, what is required of members of your club:

- Athletes– acceptable behaviour, squad/ team criteria, club uniform, attending galas, away trips etc.
- Parents/ carers - acceptable behaviour, timetables, fees, responsibilities etc.
- Members – covering committee, coaches/ teachers and other volunteers, acceptable behaviour, contact details etc.

How to use this guide

Each section will provide guidance on what to include and suggestions that the club committee can decide on. There are some items highlighted in red and in brackets that should be replaced by specifics relating to your club.

For further advice and assistance please contact your regional support officer .

List of Terms and Abbreviations

(Club)	The name of your club
(Discipline)	The aquatic discipline(s) in which the members participate
AGM	Annual General Meeting
EGM	Extraordinary General Meeting
CCO	Club Children's Officer
Management Committee	The body elected by the members for the management of the business and affairs of the club
Officer	Officers of a club i.e. the chairperson, secretary or treasurer
Leader	Any person, whether paid or unpaid, who is responsible for those participating in the aquatic disciplines. Roles include but are not limited to coach, teacher, team manager, chaperone, helper, committee members, supervisor and sports science personnel.



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Introduction to Club Handbook

Club Description

Provide some background information on your club that may be of interest to new or prospective members, including any achievements. Include reference to your club constitution. Suggested content on club description is listed in red, delete and add your own club information here.

- Name and type of club; swimming, water polo, masters, diving etc.
- When was club set up?
- Is your club competitive/non-competitive
- Location – where is your club based?

Objectives of the Club

Objectives of your club should reflect what is in your constitution; suggestions taken from the Swim Ireland constitution template are included. If you have a club mission statement you could include in this section

Section 1 - Membership

Information is individual to each club depending on disciplines, squads and teams available. Delete or add detail as relevant to your club.

- Disciplines offered
- Squads/ Teams that the club can offer
- Squad/ Team structure and movement criteria
- Swimming lesson structure

Becoming a member

Membership year varies in clubs, edit as required. Suggested list of requirements annually listed. Include your membership/ direct debit forms in the appendices. Swim Ireland membership form is included in Appendix A.

Member Participation Policy

To support clubs with encouraging member participation, a template policy is included in Appendix B and as a separate policy template. This can be edited to meet your discipline and club needs.

Codes of Conduct

Codes of conduct and declaration forms should be available to all members at the start of the year.

Joining the club

If your club offers trials the criteria and process should be listed here.



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Membership Fees

Edit as necessary, ensure payment options are very clear to your members

Cheque or cash payments – may not be suitable for monthly payments, state preferred payment method of fees as necessary.

Process for dealing with unpaid fees, should be the same as your constitution.

Fee Structure

Enter your club logo in second box and list your club fees, example has been given.

Squads/ Teams

Provide information on your squads or teams in this section, suggested content:

- Name of squad/ team
- How many times weekly do they train?
- What do they train for? i.e. Competition/ standards
- Entry criteria
- When are trials held?
- LTAD model – where does your club fit within the Swim Ireland Long Term Athlete Development?

Session Timetable

Suggested layout for session timetable, to include pool and gym sessions, edit as required

Drop Off and Collection

Drop off and collection may be determined by the facility you train in. If using multiple facilities provide information for each facility. If the facility/ facilities have rules about use of changing rooms (i.e. age that children are permitted to change alone) this could be included here.

Person on duty rota

It is a requirement that all pool/ dry land activities are supervised, and each club must have a rota in place and sent regularly to their members. This information must be shared with members/ parents upon joining and at the start of each year/season. If you have a specific system in your club i.e. same day every month, considerations for more than 1 child or working commitments you should inform members.

Club Gear/ Kit

Provide information on what kit is required from athletes. It may also be useful to include preferred or recommended suppliers. Recommended equipment list should be edited as per club requirements.



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Section 2 - Club Roles and Contact Details

This section will introduce you to the people and roles involved in managing your club.

The roles covered are:

1. Management Committee
2. Club Children's Officer (CCO)
3. Coaches and Teachers
4. Team Managers
5. Officials

1. Management Committee

This is an opportunity to introduce members to the role and work undertaken by committee members. Edit meeting frequency and method of contact.

Committee names should be kept up to date. Personal phone numbers are optional, a club phone is recommended. All email addresses should be for club use only as per Swim Ireland GDPR policy 2019. Committee members' roles can be amended to suit – PRO, club gear etc., contact details for officers are required, other committee members are optional. Example of suggested email address secretarytorpedoes@gmail.com

2. Club Children's Officer (CCO)

At least one CCO is required in a club with members under 18. Two are recommended for clubs with in excess of twenty children. Keep the names and contact details up to date.

3. Coaches and Teachers

Coach/ teachers names should be kept up to date. Email addresses and phone numbers are optional, an email address per squad for each coach to access is recommended. Ensure details below correspond with club constitution.

4. Team Managers/ Chaperone's

Team managers and chaperone's are required for all club away trips and competitions. This is a good opportunity to introduce members to volunteer roles in clubs.

5. Officials

Edit as required for your discipline. Include some information about specific requirements in your club for events you may host.



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Section 3 - Facility Information and Emergency Action Plan

In this section you should copy details from your facility's normal operating procedure and emergency action plan. To be included:

- Information about the facility/facilities you train in
- Access to changing rooms
- Rules of facility that need to be adhered to by athletes
- Emergency Action Plan

Section 4 - General Club Information

Competitions

Details may vary depending on aquatic discipline, edit as necessary. A sample Gala Guide is included at Appendix C and a water polo guide at Appendix D, if you wish to include. Clubs should be aware of each competition that an athlete takes part in.

Photography and Filming

Swim Ireland guidelines are included in this section. If your club has additional requirement include or edit as required.

Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

Recommended text included for complaints and disciplinary procedures.

Club Links and Policies

In this section you can include website addresses for Swim Ireland, regions, water polo etc. Also, a list of Swim Ireland policies is useful. As policies can change or be updated it is better to reference them rather than include in handbook.