



CIMSPA PROFESSIONAL STANDARD

Lifeguard

(FULL STANDARD)

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ABOUT THIS STANDARD

This document is a CIMSPA professional standard (full version).

The full version of this standard is available to CIMSPA awarding organisation, skills development, higher education and further education partners.

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1. Overview

Professional standard: Lifeguard

This professional standard outlines the role and scope of a Lifeguard and the essential knowledge and skills that are needed to meet the sector minimum deployment standards. It also provides guidance for the development of educational products that will be endorsed by CIMSPA.

The Lifeguard sits in the sport and physical activity sector as part of the leisure operations industry.

The agreed industry prerequisite to become a Lifeguard is to have achieved a CIMSPA endorsed educational product that fully meets this professional standard. Individuals who achieve this will be deemed to have met this standard and will also be eligible for CIMSPA membership.

Endorsed qualification logo

Qualifications that meet the requirements of this CIMSPA professional standard will display this official CIMSPA endorsement logo.



2. Scope of the Lifeguard

The role of the Lifeguard is to facilitate a safe aquatic environment to enable users to participate in a range of aquatic activities.

- The Lifeguard will typically cover environments such as swimming pools, inland water and beaches and will safely supervise a range of aquatic equipment, activities and features specific to these environments.
- Working as part of a team the Lifeguard is responsible for the safe supervision, prevention, intervention and rescues for users within their care.
- As a first point of contact, the Lifeguard will provide high levels of customer care where they will assist with any customer feedback.
- The Lifeguard will report to a supervisor or manager and will typically cover a seven-day week on a rota basis resulting in shifts that may include weekends, early mornings, evenings and public holidays.

3. CIMSPA membership eligibility

People who have achieved this standard will be able to access Affiliate membership with CIMSPA.

Refer to the CIMSPA Professional Standards Matrix for a comprehensive overview of job roles and progression opportunities.

4. Summary of knowledge and skills

Lifeguard

Topic	Knowledge	Skills
Industry legislation, organisational policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How relevant industry legislation and organisational policies and procedures impact on a Lifeguard's day to day role and responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adhere to relevant industry legislation and organisational policies and procedures in line with organisational guidelines.
Enhancing the customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to engage, communicate, obtain feedback and support customers in the safe use and enjoyment of the aquatic environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhancing the customer experience.
Safe equipment, activity areas, cleaning and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to safely prepare activity areas for use and how to safely set up, dismantle and store equipment.• How to undertake routine maintenance and cleaning tasks of the facility and its equipment.• How to monitor and maintain safe and high standards of hygiene in accordance with the facility's health and safety procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to organise own work and collaboratively work with colleagues to ensure that routine maintenance and cleaning tasks are undertaken in line with the facility's cleaning schedule whilst minimising the impact on the customer experience.• Ability to ensure that activity areas are ready for use and that equipment is set up, dismantled and stored safely.
Technical lifeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current basic life support techniques including first aid and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation techniques.• How to safely supervise an aquatic environment, activities and users.• How to observe users' movement, identify aquatic ability, hazards, incidents and demonstrate safe preventions, interventions and rescue techniques.• How to adapt supervisory techniques based on the environment, activities and user abilities.• How to respond to emergency aquatic situations including rescue and extraction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correctly demonstrate a wide range of life support techniques, carry out lifesaving, first aid and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation techniques.• Demonstrate analysis of environments, activities and users to ensure safe usage for all customers.• Demonstrate teamwork, communication and safe casualty management during intervention, prevention or emergency situations.
The Lifeguard's role within the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to work with minimal supervision within professional boundaries.• The lifeguard's role and responsibilities as part of a team in maintaining safe aquatic activities, services and environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to work with minimal supervision within professional boundaries through skills in: problem solving, time management, interpreting information and using own initiative.

5. Product Development Guidance

This section is aimed at organisations developing educational products mapping to this professional standard. The requirements should be taken into account in the development of all educational products seeking CIMSPA endorsement.

The CIMSPA professional development board (PDB) has agreed that any of the following educational products can be developed for the role of Lifeguard:

Educational product	Mapping requirements	Professional standard achieved on attainment?
Regulated vocational qualification	Fully mapped	YES
Apprenticeship programme	Fully mapped	YES
HE programme/modules	Fully mapped	YES

Where evidence that all elements of the professional standard are included CIMSPA endorsement can be sought.

All educational products must be submitted to CIMSPA for endorsement and should include all elements outlined in the professional standard.

Awarding organisations and higher institutions seeking CIMSPA endorsement for a product against this professional standard are asked to consider the following;

- a) They determine and justify the level of the product they have developed, in line with regulator guidance. To ensure parity, the level for all educational products that fully map to this professional standard be the same; the level assigned is determined by leading awarding organisations currently offering qualifications in the sector in which the role resides. This is not a first-to-post exercise, but one in which awarding organisations/institutions are invited to submit their levelled units/full qualification for review as part of the CIMSPA endorsement process. Once agreed by CIMSPA, all subsequent fully-mapped educational products must conform to the level set for this professional standard.

Level descriptors set out the generic knowledge and skills associated with the typical holder of a qualification at a given level and it should be ensured that educational products fully mapping to this professional standard are a 'best-fit' for the level assigned.

- b) They determine the total qualification time for the qualification/unit and outline the minimum requirements for practical assessment.

They stipulate that practical assessment must be conducted where practically possible in a real world environment ideally, 'on the job'/at work.

Where practically possible a practical end point assessment is conducted with 'real clients'— the use of peers for an end point practical assessment is not deemed appropriate.

- c) Their quality assurance meets the appropriate regulator's guidance. Including; internal and external quality assurance, staffing requirements and assessment generation and evidence.

6. Learning and development requirements (LDRs)

The LDRs outline the key areas of learning and assessment that should be contained within any educational product seeking CIMSPA endorsement for a professional standard. There are 5 key areas of learning and development for the profession of Lifeguard, of which all areas are interconnected and mandatory. The key areas are:

1. Industry legislation and guidance, organisational policies and procedures
2. Maximising the customer experience
3. Safe equipment, activity areas, cleaning and maintenance
4. Technical lifeguarding
5. The Lifeguard's role within the organisation

N.B. Examples are given within the LDRs to provide an overview of the knowledge and skills most relevant to the role. It is not mandatory to assess learners against 100% of the examples provided, however, sufficient coverage to ensure occupational competence on achievement must be ensured. This will be reviewed as part of the CIMSPA endorsement process.

There are elements of learning and development that are appropriate for pool and beach lifeguards using the following key;

Where a PB appears after the reference number = both pool and beach lifeguards. e.g. K1.1PB

Where a P appears after the reference number = pool lifeguards only. e.g. K1.1P

Where a B appears after the reference number = beach lifeguards only. e.g. K1.1B

1. Industry legislation and guidance, organisational policies and procedures

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Lifeguard must:
K1.1PB	Policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand organisational policies and procedures:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Normal operating plan (NOP)- Emergency action plan (EAP)- Principles of risk assessments- Admissions policy- Training policy- Environmental policy- Equality and diversity (The Equality Act 2010)
K1.2PB	Legal and regulatory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the key legal and regulatory requirements:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Health and Safety at work act 1974<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Section 2 - employer responsibility to employeeso Section 3 - employer responsibility to people other than their employees i.e. public- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Regulation 3 - risk assessmentso Regulation 5 - health and safety arrangements (e.g. NOP)o Regulation 8 - arrangements for serious and imminent danger (e.g. EAP)o Regulation 9 - contact with external services (e.g. EAP)o Regulation 13 - capabilities and training
K1.3P	Sector guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand sector guidance relevant to the environment and safe supervision of swimming pools:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The HSE publication Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools (HSG 179)- BS EN 15288-1 2008: Swimming pools. Safety requirements for design (+A1:2010). BS EN 15288- 2 2008: Safety Requirements for Operation
K1.3PB	Sector guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand sector guidance. ROSPA. Safety at inland water sites, Safety on beaches.

Ref	Skills:	A Lifeguard must be able to:
S1.1PB	Report writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete accurate reports such as accidents, incidents and near misses.
S1.2PB	Interpreting information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate processing information and following instructions using professional judgement.
S1.3PB	Safe working practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate conscientious working practices to ensure the safe and smooth running of the aquatic environment.

2. Maximising the customer experience

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Lifeguard must:
K2.1PB	Aquatic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the specific aquatic environment that is being supervised and how this affects the services and activities available.

K2.2PB	Customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how to act in a professional and approachable manner, • Understand how to enhance the customer experience.
K2.3PB	Customer retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the services available in the aquatic environment. • Understand the importance of customer retention and how to influence customer retention.
K2.4PB	Customer communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand different methods and styles of communication: e.g. face-to-face, telephone, written, body language, open questions and active listening; to suit a range of situations and how these apply to customers from differing demographics. • Know how to manage different types of behaviour that could be encountered in the aquatic environment.
K2.4PB	Customer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand different methods of obtaining customer feedback, channels of recording and reporting feedback. • Understand the feedback cycle and how the lifeguard's role in it can impact on the customer experience.
Ref	Skills:	A Lifeguard must be able to:
S2.1PB	Aquatic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relay knowledge on safe usage of the aquatic environment, activities and services to users.
S2.2PB	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate different communication methods according to the situation and manage different types of behaviour in the aquatic environment.

3. Safe equipment, activity areas, cleaning and maintenance

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Lifeguard must:
K3.1PB	Use of equipment and activity areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the relevant equipment a lifeguard may use according to the environment.• Understand how to use equipment and activity areas correctly to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for customers.
K3.2PB	Cleaning substances and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the principle uses and suitability of a range of cleaning substances and equipment e.g. tile cleaner, wet/dry vacuum cleaners, mop and bucket, etc.
K3.3P	Safe systems of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand standard operating procedures with regards to routine maintenance and cleaning, assembly, dismantling and storage of equipment adhering to: manufacturer guidelines, control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH), manual handling techniques, national governing body (NGB) guidelines, safe and serviceable equipment policies, environmental policies, maintenance inspection plans for specific equipment, portable appliance testing, security and safe storage of equipment.
K3.4PB	Personal safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the role of personal protective equipment, risk assessments, normal operating plans (NOPs) and emergency action plans (EAPs) in protecting personal safety.• Know how to maintain own safety.
K3.5PB	Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know how to identify hazards relating to: physical environment, activity, people and aquatic operations.• Understand the risk assessment process and reporting procedures.• Understand the control measures that are in place.• Know how to maintain the safety of others.
K3.6PB	Cleaning schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the cleaning routines for a range of relevant areas: e.g. toilets, aquatic environment etc.
K3.7PB	Waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the different types of waste: e.g. hazardous and non-hazardous and how to dispose of it,

Ref	Skills:	A Lifeguard must be able to:
S3.1P	Use of equipment and activity areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor customers' use of equipment and activity areas; intervene if necessary to ensure customer safety.
S3.2PB	Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify hazards based on the level of risk and demonstrate appropriate action including reporting procedures.

4. Technical lifeguarding

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Lifeguard must:
K4.1PB	Safe supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how to safely supervise aquatic environments, activities, features and services. • Understand how to safely supervise different users. • Know how to identify hazards relating to: physical environment, activity, people and aquatic operations and understand how to complete a risk assessment. • Understand how to undertake safe scanning techniques. • Understand lifeguard supervisory positions and numbers. • Understand different drowning prevention aids and technology. • Understand and know how to identify non-compliance of the safe user rules and guidelines specific to the aquatic environment. • Know the benefits and limitations of using drowning prevention technology.
K4.2PB	Rescue and extraction Pool and Beach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the types of rescue and extraction equipment available. • Understand the different uses of equipment available to aid rescues and extractions. • Understand the suitability of rescue and extraction techniques. • Understand rescue and extraction techniques in an aquatic environment and when to apply them. • Understand how to report maintenance requirements for rescue and extraction equipment. • Understand casualty management. -
K4.2P	Rescue and extraction Pool only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand swimming pool emergencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discovery of casualty in the water. - Serious injury to bather. - Overcrowding. - Disorderly behaviour. - Lack of water clarity. - Evacuation of the swimming pool environment.

K4.2B Rescue and extraction
Beach only

- Understand beach and inland water environment emergencies:
 - Casualty in difficulty in the water:
 - Multiple casualties.
 - Injured casualty/casualties.
 - Suspected spinal injury.
 - Drowning casualty:
 - Submerged bather.
 - Injured casualty on land.
 - Lost or found child.
 - Public order / antisocial behaviour.
 - Evacuation of the beach / land area.
 - Evacuation of the water.
 - Pollution.
 - Sand structure collapse (beach only).
 - Mud and quicksand emergency (beach only).
 - Fire.
 - Hazardous material.
 - Major emergencies.
 - Communication:
 - Liaison with emergency services.
 - Recording and reporting.
-

K4.3PB First aid

- Understand the lifeguard's roles and responsibilities when administering first aid.
- Understand the principles of managing incidents and emergency situations.
- Know how to administer a range of first aid techniques:
 - Bleeding.
 - Breathing problems.
 - Burns and scalds.
 - Chain of survival.
 - Choking: adult, child and infant.
 - CPR: using pocket mask, adult, child, infant, drowning and spinal injury.
 - Cramp.
 - Diabetes.
 - Dislocations.
 - Facial injuries.
 - Fainting.
 - Fractures.
 - Head injuries.
 - Heart attack.
 - Heat condition injuries.
 - Poisoning.
 - Primary survey.
 - Priorities of casualty management.
 - Recovery position.
 - Secondary survey.
 - Seizures and epilepsy.
 - Shock.
 - Sprains and strains.
 - Stroke.
 - Casualty management.
 - Use of an AED.
 - Problems with CPR.
 - More than one rescuer for first aid and CPR
 - AED in swimming pools beach and inland.
 - Spinal injuries.
 - Drowning casualties.
 - Resuscitation in the water.
 - Checking pulse to monitor casualty.
 - After the accident/incident.
 - Dressing and bandages.
 - Unconscious casualty.
 - Hygiene procedures.
 - History, signs and symptoms.
 - Taking emergency action.
 - Seeking emergency help.
 - Cardiac arrest.
 - Principles of airway management.
 - Managing regurgitation of stomach contents.

K4.4PB Communication

- Know how to communicate with users, colleagues and emergency services in relation to prevention, intervention, rescue and extraction.
 - Understand the different uses of communication equipment available to aid rescue and extractions.
-

Ref	Skills:	A Lifeguard must be able to:
S4.1PB	Supervising users safely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply scanning techniques. • Follow normal operating plans (NOPs) relating to lifeguard supervisory positions. • Demonstrate appropriate action when dealing with identified hazards.
S4.2PB	Prevention, intervention and rescue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and communicate safe rules and guidelines to users using a range of techniques and equipment. • Demonstrate safe and effective rescues and extractions of different types of casualties with and without suitable equipment. • Demonstrate safe and effective use of rescue aids and extraction equipment.
S4.3	Lifeguard technical competence. Pool and Beach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the technical competencies required to be a lifeguard: • Demonstrate the principles of incident and emergency situation management.
S4.3P	Lifeguard technical competence. Pool only.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming pool lifeguards will need to demonstrate the following water based skills: • Jump and dive into deep water. • Swim 50m in no more than 60 seconds. • Swim 100m continuously on front. • Swim 100m continuously on back. • In deep water, tread water for 30 seconds. • Surface dive to the deepest part of the pool. • Climb out unaided without the use of steps or ladders.
S4.3B	Lifeguard technical competence. Beach only.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beach, open water and inland water lifeguards will need to demonstrate the following water based skills: • Swim 200m in a swimming pool (100m on front, 100m on back) in less than 4 minutes (recommended minimum pool length 25m). • Swim 400m in a pool in less than 8 minutes. • Dive to a minimum depth of 1.5m. • Run 200m continuously.
S4.4PB	Aquatic first aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate administering aquatic first aid.

5. The Lifeguard's role within the organisation

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Lifeguard must:
K5.1PB	Organisational structure and goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand the principles of an aquatic environment structure, vision, mission and goals.
K5.2PB	Roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand the roles and responsibilities of colleagues within the organisation.
K5.3PB	Own role	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand professional boundaries, code of conduct, own role and personal responsibilities, reporting lines and contribution.
K5.5PB	Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand the qualification and continuous professional development requirements of the lifeguard role.
K5.6PB	Internal and external measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand internal and external performance measures e.g. quality assurance, external audits and key performance indicators (KPI's).

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