

QE2 - Open Water Training Rules

The organisers have an agreement with Northumberland County Council to use the QE2 Country Park Lake for open water swimming on Thursday evenings from 1800hrs until 2000hrs. We do **not** have an agreement to use the lake at any other time.

Open water swimming carries certain risks, it is important that participants adhere to the following guidelines:

- A safety officer will be appointed before each session. This person will be responsible for liaising with the venue operator / owner to ascertain water quality issues. The safety officer has the final decision on whether a session can proceed.
- No entry into the water will be allowed until all safety arrangements are in place and the safety officer/session leader has indicated that it is safe to do so
- Swimmers must register prior to entry into the water and must report to safety officer on exit.
- All swimmers must provide their emergency contact details along with details of any medical issues to the session leader/coach and safety officer. This information will be recorded and retained by the session organisers.
- Before every session a pre-swim briefing will be given. This will provide clear guidance on the session, the group structure, the course to be swum, and information on what to do if a swimmer experiences difficulty.
- Sessions will not enter into water space used for other activities
- All sessions will finish at the allotted time
- Water temperature will be checked prior to each session. See British Triathlon Rulebook for specific water temperatures
- Water quality is tested and results will be available for inspection if required.
- At each session a First Aid kit and safety blankets will be available
- Swimmers are advised to swim within their own ability and adhere to any directions given by the safety officer.
- Swimmers are asked to review and sign up to the rules for open water swimming.
- Wetsuits must be worn at all times.
- A brightly coloured swim hat must be worn by swimmers so they can be seen.
- Swimmers must use a defined course set by the session leader/coach using landmarks and buoys. People new to open water swimming are encouraged to stay in the area near the buoys and if they get into trouble advised to roll onto their backs and wave / shout for attention.
- Swimmers are to swim parallel to the bank / shore where possible
- Swimmers are asked to be aware of swimmers around them experiencing difficulty.
- Safety cover will be provided at all sessions and this will not be below the required Minimum standard identified in the risk assessment.

General Advice for Coaching Open Water Swimming Sessions

Whilst water quality tests provide an indication of the suitability of the venue for open water swimming they do not mean that there is a complete absence of potential pathogens. Noted below are simple practices that triathletes are advised to adopt to minimise risk of infections further:

- Cover all cuts and abrasions, however minor, with sticking plasters.
- You should not consider swimming if you have deep cuts
- Wash hands in fresh water before eating after you have swum
- Take a full shower at the earliest opportunity
- Try to ingest a minimum amount of water whilst swimming