

Assessing students Water Skills for Life

Across the seven competencies there are 27 skills to learn – 21 in water and six in the classroom or poolside. These do not need to be taught in order.

Lessons can cover multiple competencies and skills. Some skills, or combination of skills will take a student longer than a set of lessons (even years) to achieve.



Focus on water safety and awareness for all skills.

Expect students to assess risk and apply critical thinking, make safe decisions and act on them.

It is expected that by Year 8, students will have achieved all 27 skills, and have opportunities to reiterate these and develop them further.

These include:

- **with and without goggles**
- **In togs and in clothes**
- **in shallow and deep water**
- **in cold and warm water**
- **in simulated and real environments**
- **as part of aquatic activities and sports.**

Reinforce skills by repeating them throughout lessons so students retain learnings. For safety of self and others perform dry rescues only.



Include Water Skills For life skills in your other aquatic programmes (but don't be restricted by them) and adapt them to meet the needs of the setting.

How to check whether students are competent

Ask each student to choose two sets of five of the 21 water skills to perform in a sequence.

Each set must include at least one of the three 'Starred' skills.

They should be able to perform the five skills in continuous sequence, preferably in open water.

Give students situations so they can apply their critical thinking and decision-making skills to choose and perform the most suitable skill combinations.

[The two sets must be different combinations of skills]

For example, say 'boat capsized'. The student could decide to (1) tread water to control panic, (2) perform a vertical rotation to find the boat, (3) move themselves 50m towards the boat, (4) do a surface dive move underwater to get under



a wave, and (5) climb onto the boat (safe exit).

Recording achievements

All student achievements are to be recorded in the national Water Skills For Life Database. This provides you, the teacher and Water Safety New Zealand an understanding of student progress and competencies throughout their years at primary school.

- Students are assessed as 'achieved' in a skill when they can confidently and competently demonstrate it. This is recorded as A on the Achievement Spreadsheet.
- If the student is in the process of learning the skill, or has learnt part of a skill sequence, they can be assessed as 'not yet achieved' or 'N' on the Achievement Spreadsheet.
- If the student has not yet had the opportunity to start learning a skill, report nothing.

