

HCSP Risk Assessment

The HCSP Risk Assessment identifies key hazards associated with operating a small, open-air, volunteer-run swimming pool and outlines the control measures needed to keep swimmers and volunteers safe.

1. Pool Environment & Design

Risks include shallow-water hazards, constant-depth pool layout, pool edges, access points, and water circulation systems. Controls focus on maintaining clear visibility, ensuring sump guards and skimmer protection are in place, and keeping the poolside free from trip and slip hazards.

2. Behaviour of Swimmers

Risks arise from running, pushing, rough play, misuse of equipment, overcrowding, and non-swimmers entering without buoyancy aids. Controls include enforcing pool rules, volunteer supervision, restricting bather numbers and issuing clear instructions to swimmers and parents.

3. Medical Conditions & Individual Needs

Swimmers may have conditions such as epilepsy, asthma, diabetes or may be neurodivergent or have disabilities. Risks include sudden medical episodes or difficulties in the water. Controls involve close monitoring of swimmer behaviour, requiring responsible adults for children, and removing swimmers who appear distressed.

4. Water Hygiene & Quality

Hazards include contamination (faeces, vomit, blood), cloudy water, incorrect chemical balance, and equipment failure. Controls include daily and weekly water testing, clear contamination procedures, routine backwashing, vacuuming, and chemical team oversight.

5. Slips, Trips & Falls

Wet surfaces on poolside and changing rooms present significant slip risks. Controls include regular cleaning, visual inspections, appropriate signage, and encouraging safe behaviour (e.g., no running).

6. Emergency Situations

Risks include weather hazards (thunder/lightning), fire, fumes, gas leaks, and pool visibility issues. Controls involve immediate evacuation procedures, predefined assembly points, first aid availability, access restrictions, and communication with emergency services as needed.

7. Volunteer Responsibilities & Communication

Risks increase if volunteers are unclear, inconsistent, or untrained. Controls include maintaining a professional, calm manner, giving clear instructions, early intervention when behaviour escalates, and ensuring all volunteers read the NOP, EAP and safeguarding policy.

Overall Summary

The HCSP Risk Assessment concludes that safe operation is achievable through vigilant volunteer supervision, consistent enforcement of pool rules, strict water quality monitoring, clear emergency procedures, and proactive management of swimmer behaviour. Risks cannot be eliminated entirely, but they can be effectively controlled through the structured processes outlined in the NOP and EAP.