



Beach Lifeguard Qualifications FAQ's

Why do a Beach Lifeguard course?

If you want to work as beach lifeguard, surf instructor, outdoor activity instructors or want to start on a career in rescue and emergency care, the Beach Lifeguard is a fundamental first step.

Can I be a Beach Lifeguard?

If you're fit, healthy, over school leaving age, and can swim 400m, we've got everything to prepare you for the best summer job around.

What do I need?

You need a National Vocational Beach Lifeguard Qualification (NVBLQ) or equivalent to become a Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), lifeguard.

The NVBLQ is considered the national standard for beach lifeguarding and was developed by experts across a number of national lifesaving organisations.

What's involved?

The NVBLQ course takes around 40 hours to complete and includes modules on beach lifeguarding, life support and first aid, ocean skills and pool skills. It's physically demanding and includes swimming to set times and lifting, so you'll need to be a competent swimmer with a good level of fitness before you start.

You'll be independently assessed at the end of the course to ensure that you have the skills and knowledge to work as a beach lifeguard.

To find out more about the NVBLQ course from the RLSS UK website, [click here](#)

How fit do I need to be?

To pass your NVBLQ you'll need to be able to swim 400m in under 8 minutes and be able to swim and paddle a rescue board in the surf.

RNLI Lifeguards must be able to complete:

A 400m pool swim in under 7½ minutes, the first 200m of which must be completed in under 3½ minutes

A 25m pool swim underwater and a 25m surface swim consecutively in under 50 seconds

A 200m beach run in under 40 seconds.

What will I be doing on the lifeguard course?

Candidates will have to demonstrate their knowledge and capabilities in the following core competencies; The beach environment, lifeguarding theory, CPR, First Aid, open water skills including board and tube rescue.

Do I need to have experience?

Previous experience is desirable but not essential as all training will be provided during the course.

Having basic board skills and knowledge of the beach and ocean environments will help greatly. If you do not have these skills or knowledge already we strongly suggest you try and get some pre-course.

Where will the course take place?

Most of our courses take place at Newquay Activity Centre based right on Towan beach in the centre of Newquay. As far as training venues go, they don't get much better as your classroom looks right over the beach. Towan beach is sheltered from most winds and has great surf, making it one of the best lifeguard training venues in the UK.

We also run courses in Bundoran, Ireland with local surf schools and La Torche, Brittany, France with Kreiz breizh sauvetage secourisme / Celtic Surf Camp.

If you have a group or are an activity centre or surf school and would like us to provide training at your venue please get in touch.

Do I need transport?

No, our training centre is on the beach and in the town centre so all the amenities and accommodation are a stone's throw. Not wasting time driving to venues maximizes your training time.

Is accommodation included?

No, but we can suggest the best places to suit all budgets.

There are loads of other accommodation so just ask us for any recommendations.

Do you provide food?

Tea and coffee are available and if you train hard you may even get some cake!

You will need to either bring a packed lunch or have money to buy something in town which has some epic eateries such as the Pavillion Bakery and Gustos.

What is the Surf Life Saving Great Britain (SLSGB) Surf Lifeguard award?

The SLSGB Surf Lifeguard or NARS award as it used to be known is now known as the Surf Lifeguard Award.

This award is the highest obtainable award for those wishing to work as a Beach Lifeguard in the UK and is recognised internationally.

What separates this qualification from others is the time required for the 400m pool swim and the use of oxygen. This award is also specifically surf endorsed so assessment must take place in surf over 2ft.

What is the difference between the Royal Life Saving Society awards and Surf Lifesaving Great Britain awards?

For the NVBLQ there is no difference, it really comes down to personal preference or sometimes employers preference.

Currently, the RNLI website has links to both.

It's really up to you and fortunately, we offer both RLSS & SLSGB qualifications so just let us know which you prefer.

SLSGB require you to become a member RLSS do not have this requirement.

SLSGB offer a 1-day proficiency to requalify, RLSS require 3 days and independent assessment.

SLSGB also offer the Surf Coach Safety & Rescue Award specifically designed for Surf coaches and other watersports instructors, it can also be upgraded to the full beach lifeguard award. RLSS does not offer these courses.

What is the difference between the Beach Lifeguard course and the SLSGB Surf Coach Safety and Rescue Award?

The Surf Coach Safety & Rescue Competency Award is specifically designed for water sports coaches who need to have a lifesaving qualification. It cannot be used to apply for beach lifeguard positions.

It is a shorter course, the timed pool swim is 200m in under 5 minutes in this award and the 200m run must be completed in less than 1 min. However, it still covers all of the first aid and basic life support required of beach Lifeguards and is just as physically demanding.

This course is also suitable for, SUP, Bodyboard coasteering and Outdoor Adventure Instructors.

This course is valid for 12 months whereas the NVBLQ is valid for 24 months.

You can also upgrade the surf coach award to full beach lifeguard while still valid.

[Click here for more](#)

What can I do post course?

The NVBLQ allows you to work as a lifeguard on beaches in the UK & Ireland and is valid internationally.

You can apply directly to the RNLI, international Lifeguard organizations as well as numerous private companies, hotels, resorts and Outdoor activity providers.

How can I find out more information, like pay rates, work hours, etc?

For further info on the above please [click here](#)