

Taster Session Induction For People New to Rowing

Prospective members have the opportunity to have two taster rows. No prospective rower can have more than two taster rows since they will not be covered by the WSRA insurance.

The following programme should be the basis in full of both induction rows. Just because the prospective member has been instructed once does not mean they will remember the information on the second row.

Induction rows should only be done with experienced crews and coxswains, including a club coach. The coach will be responsible for the induction of the new rower and will be the senior rower.

All crew must wear life jackets and the new rower must be instructed on when and how to activate it. The correct fitting of the life jacket will be checked by the senior rower.

A general introduction that explains that the sport has a good safety record, but that there are intrinsic dangers and that the sea is unpredictable, must be given.

The importance of following the coxswain's instructions and not doing anything until instructed will be stressed as unexpected actions could lead to loss of control of the boat. This is applicable both in and out of the water. The importance of listening to the cox at ALL times will also be stressed.

The new rower will be shown:

- how and when to get into the boat safely
- how to secure the oar
- how to secure their feet and ensure the block is properly adjusted, as well as how to unsecure their feet quickly in an emergency
- how and when to exit the boat

Preferably the above can be practiced with the boat on dry land before taking the boat down the slipway

New rowers will have a demonstration on the technique of the stroke and then supported to practise 'dummy' strokes in the boat when still tethered to the slipway.

The new rower will be instructed in basic terms: the difference between red and green sides, easy oars, come forward to row, row, stop the boat, back row.

The key issue of keeping in time with the stroke must be stressed, the new rower will be told that if they fall out of time then they should stop and pick up the timing when they are ready.

When the coach feels the new rower is ready to row, the crew will start to row in the harbour. If the cox and/or coach feels the new rower is able to row outside the harbour the crew will follow the procedures to exit the harbour. This should only be done when conditions are assessed as good.

The length of the two sessions should be appropriate to the fitness and demonstrated competence of the new rower. The senior rower will assess and set this. It is best if the senior rower is the same person for both rows; if this is not possible there should be communication between the two coaches / senior rowers about the strengths and weaknesses of the new rower and suggestions for the second row.

Induction programme for New Members

There should be two induction rows for new members, and coaching should cover the same areas for both.

Induction rows should only be done with experienced crews and coxswains, including a club coach. The coach will be the senior rower and will be responsible for the new member's instruction.

All crew must wear life jackets and the new member must be instructed on when and how to activate it. The new member will be shown how to fit the life jacket properly and the fit will be checked.

New members must be shown the emergency contact and the WRSA safety guidelines poster. These should be gone over and explained.

New members should be shown the pre-launch risk assessment and involved in its completion. This should include the weather conditions board on the Harbour Master's office during the sailing season.

The new member will be given instruction on pre-launch, launch, harbour exit, row and return as set out in the Safe Rowing document. This should include safe portage.

The coaching on the induction row should include safe launching and securing of oars, timing and basic shape of the stroke, safe removal of oar and securing of the gate, as well as key coxswain instructions such as come forward to row, row, back row, easy oars, stop the boat, red and green side.

Whether the row leaves the harbour, and if it does the distance and structure of the row, will be decided by the coach (and relayed to the coxswain if they are different) based on the fitness and competence of the new member.

The coach will debrief the new member to get feedback on what went well and what could be better. The coach should get feedback on how the new member felt about the row.

All new members must complete the membership form and will be sent by email or hard copy the current Club Risk Assessment Checklist, the 'Safe Rowing at Aberaeron' Guide, the WRSA Safety Guidelines and the club training programme.

The club coaches will oversee a six row training programme for the new rowers (following).

New Rowers Training Programme

Session 1

Video rower in boat and review footage to agree areas to focus on for improvement.

Session 2

This will use an erg machine to learn about fitness and improving core strength. Look at using muscles and levers to effectively create power throughout the stroke.

Session 3

Boat session concentrating on posture: how poor posture reduces power, puts asymmetric stress on the rower's body and can affect the entire performance of the boat.

Session 4

Boat session concentrating on oar technique and how best used to transmit the power created by our bodies to the water to give the boat maximum thrust.

Session 5

This will focus on synchronisation – how we row as a team and maximise the performance of the crew, rather than the individual.

Session 6

Re-video rower and review footage together and agree areas for improvement and those requiring further tweaking. Get feedback from rower about their own performance, the effectiveness of the coaching, and future foci.