

## Information on Lifesaving

### What is Lifesaving?

Lifesaving evolved out of the need to equip people with survival and rescue skills to prevent drowning and has existed as a sport for over 100 years. With humanitarian origins, the charity organisations governing the sport today are still driven by the same desire to increase participation in lifesaving activities to ensure safety in and around water.

Two key organisations drive Lifesaving in the UK:

- In the pool / still water: The **Royal Lifesaving Society UK (RLSS UK)** is the National Governing Body for Lifesaving Sport. RLSS UK is also the Drowning Prevention Charity and the UK's leading provider of water safety and drowning prevention education.
- In the ocean: **Surf Lifesaving Great Britain** is the national charity of volunteer beach lifesavers. It also provides training and qualifications to all beach lifeguards.

The **International Lifesaving Federation** is the world authority to *"prevent drowning and re-group national life saving organisations/federations aiming at improving water safety, water rescue, lifesaving and lifeguarding and lifesaving sport"*. Lifesaving is also recognised by the International Olympic Committee and the Commonwealth Games Federation.

The Lifesaving sport comprises a wide range of activities spanning from rescue-simulated swimming to survive and rescue skills and first aid. Each activity requires swimmers to learn and use different physical and mental skills, both independently and as part of a team.

For more information, please see:

- International Life Saving Federation <https://www.ilsf.org/>
- RLSS UK <https://www.rlss.org.uk/>
- Surf Lifesaving GB <http://www.slsgb.org.uk/>

### What is the Rookie Lifeguard Programme?

The Rookie Lifeguard Programme is a fun and exciting lifesaving awards scheme for children aged 8-12 years, teaching self-rescue, survival, simulated emergency response (rescue) and lifesaving sport skills. The Programme allows swimmers to gain Rookie Lifeguard qualifications in a Bronze, Silver, Gold Award scheme.

It is an RLSS UK programme, that supports swimmers to go onto the Survive and Save Programme when aged 12 years and the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ) aged 16+ years.

For more information, please visit <https://www.rlss.org.uk/rookie-lifeguard>

## How can you compete in pool-based Lifesaving?

There are several competition opportunities testing the different elements of Lifesaving; including speed, rescue and survival skills, team work, prioritisation and strength.

Local and national competitions are organised each year and swimmers have the opportunity to compete internationally in the World Championships, Commonwealth Championships, European Championships and World Games.

The main pool-based competitions in the UK are:

- **National Speed Lifesaving Championship:** An annual competition for children aged 12 and upwards across the UK and Ireland to compete in a series of rescue-simulated swimming events. For a description of the events, please see <https://www.rlss.org.uk/lifesaving-sport-speed-lifesaving-championships>.
- **National Lifesaving Championship:** An annual competition focused on lifesaving technical skills, knowledge and decision-making abilities. For a description of the events, please see <https://www.rlss.org.uk/lifesaving-sport-national-lifesaving-championship>
- **Rookie Lifeguard Festivals:** For children aged 8 – 14 years, an exciting way for Rookie Lifeguards to test their lifesaving skills in a fun and competitive environment.
- **National Club Simulated Emergency Response Championship (SERC):** Competition that tests the initiative, judgement, knowledge and ability of four lifesavers who apply their lifesaving skills to an unknown simulated emergency situation whilst working as a team.

For more information on the various competitive opportunities, please see:

- RLSS Lifesaving Sport Competitions  
<https://www.rlss.org.uk/Pages/Category/lifesaving-sport-competitions>
- Rescue 2012, World Championships – Event Video  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTv-jlgMKRg>