



QUALIFICATION OF COXES

With the demographics of Aberdeen Boat Club, it is essential to encourage members to qualify as coxes. This needs to be followed through, by teaching members the basics; instilling a sense of responsibility for the safety of the crew and equipment in their charge; monitoring their progress and providing feedback.

Coxes need to be members of Aberdeen Boat Club and hold a current Scottish Rowing License. In the case of experienced coxes holding a current rowing license, permission to cox prior to membership will be at the discretion of the club President, Captain or Safety Officer. Anyone new to coxing on the River Dee must follow the steps below.

Initial

The “Aberdeen Boat Club Safety Induction” will be conducted by an experienced, qualified cox, with reference to the ABC safety notice board. The following will be covered:

- A description of the river and its hazards.
- The rules of the river - circulation, bridges, turning etc.
- The primary role of a cox – safety, steering, instruction.
- The club’s boats and safety equipment.
- Emergency response, including knowledge of issues related to capsize and cold water immersion.
- The Damage Log and Incident Report Form.

On completion, and before any session on the water, one of the club President, Captain or Safety Officer must be informed and agree to the next step.

Basic

Practical instruction should be given in:

- The rules and the hazards of the River Dee
- Controlling the crew
- Launching and retrieval
- Steering
- Turning
- Emergency stop

These should be conducted in good weather and stream conditions, in a coxed four, with all members of the crew having rowed for at least a year. An experienced rower and qualified cox must occupy the stroke seat to provide instruction.

When stroke believes the trainee cox demonstrates basic competence and has steered upstream of the King George VI Bridge, they will discuss with one of the club President, Captain or Safety Officer and agree to the next step.



Probationary

The club encourages members willing to cox to rapidly progress their competence and confidence. New coxes, or those unfamiliar with the River Dee, will enter a probationary period.

During probation the crew must have an experienced rower and qualified cox in the stroke seat and at least 50% of bow and stroke side rowers must have more than six months rowing experience unless a launch is present.

Practical experience should be gained in a variety of daytime conditions and levels of tide; but cox and crew should be especially aware of the ability of the cox when assessing the weather and stream.

A decision on qualification will be based on the cox consistently demonstrating their ability to:

- Put safety first - aware of the conditions of the day, the crew and other river users
- Make clear commands using standard terminology, on the water and onshore
- Position and turn the boat according to the rules of the river and steer a smooth course
- Competently steer through the bridges, at race pace, travelling upstream and downstream
- Competently leave and land at the steps and jetty.

The stroke should take the responsibility of providing regular feedback to the cox and to appraise one of the club President, Captain or Safety Officer of progress.

Based on the above ongoing discussion, two of the Officers will agree when the cox has qualified along with any conditions attached to the qualification. Their name will be added to the list of qualified day time coxes on the noticeboard.

Night Time

Regular coxes will be encouraged to qualify for night time coxing. Having demonstrated their capability in daylight they will attend a Night Coxing / Steering Assessment and pass the test to the satisfaction of the instructor.

Coxes with limited experience may have conditions attached to their qualification, allowing them to cox boats with experienced crew members for example.

Only coxes and steerers approved by any two of the Captain, President and Safety Officer, may take boats out after dark.

A full list of ABC members authorised to cox and/or steer at night will be posted on the ABC notice board and updated regularly.

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