

## **RYA Standards for Operating Training Centres Outside the UK**

### **Notes for Instructors**

#### **Introduction**

These notes are to assist RYA instructors and Principals in implementing the 'Standards for RYA Training Centres outside the UK'. The standards required by the RYA are laid down in that document.

The Headings and paragraphs refer to the questions on the Centre Inspection Report Form. The same headings are used in the 'Standards' document.

I hope you find these notes useful. They will, I am sure, be expanded over time so your comments, feedback and suggestions are very welcome and should be emailed to [david.ritchie@rya.org.uk](mailto:david.ritchie@rya.org.uk) in the RYA Training Department.

David Ritchie, RYA Training  
5<sup>th</sup> May 2004

## Operations

- A The centre **health and safety policy statement** should state the centre's intention to provide a safe environment for staff and students e.g. 'It is the intention of '*H Potter Experiences*' to eliminate as many risks as possible in delivering a safe, informative and enjoyable experience afloat.'
- B A **risk assessment** should be a clear record of the hazards present on the site, ashore and afloat. Information on how to perform risk assessments may be found on the RYA website and in the Principals Pack.
- C Having identified the **risks**, the Principal should produce a written **operating procedures document**, telling instructors how the centre works. It should also outline how any important site specific issues are dealt with e.g. local squalls, rocks, fishing boats.
- D, I The operating procedures document. The centre operating procedures document should include a system for ensuring that occasional, casual and seasonal staff and users are made aware of sailing areas and local hazards before going on the water. **Simulations** can be a useful way of preparing staff to deal with a range of incidents.
- E Operating procedures. Ensure that adequate experience is available afloat and that safety cover can deal with the unforeseen e.g. changing weather.
- F **Staff training**. This should normally be in the form of a staff induction programme, the instructor signing that they have read and understand the operating procedures. Further specialist skills training may follow.
- H The **operating area** should also be free from hazards which may cause unacceptable risks to the safety of users. Users undertaking sailing practice should also be made aware of the operating areas which are supervised by safety craft.
- J The access to the **launching area** should have an area for storage of launching trolleys, trailers, etc., and the area immediately off the launching area should be reasonably free of underwater hazards.
- Where launching is carried out from a beach or bank, rather than a slipway, consideration should also be given to the gradient, materials and/or construction of the area.
- K **The beach boss should know who and what is afloat at all times**
- M **Wear the kill cord**. At the very least, it stops the boat driving off without you and hitting someone else.
- N VHF can improve communication and safety, particularly if an observation tower is staffed by alert observers.
- O A dry fully stocked first aid kit can be difficult. Try to achieve it!
- P For a mobile to be practical, there must be continuous coverage throughout the site.

## **Tuition**

- A The chief instructor(s) should be monitoring and supporting instructors if the Principal is off site.
- C Except for windsurfing, staff without RYA qualifications may be used in appropriate ratios under the supervision of a qualified person
- D Guidelines in appropriate Instructor Handbooks e.g. G14
- E Centres are encouraged to offer endorsement courses for staff according to the fleet on site (eg Multihull instructor)

## **Dinghy/Keelboat Checklist**

- H/I Entrapments under capsized boats are rare; inexperienced guests may be most at risk, and much time and energy can be saved by masthead flotation when capsizes are frequent. However, instructors should remember that many guests will go on to sail elsewhere and masthead flotation may not be offered or appropriate. Flotation is not normally appropriate for training beginners. If masthead flotation is used during training courses, students must be briefed or introduced to capsizing without masthead flotation as part of the course,

It is useful to simulate rescuing a trapped sailor during training

## **Administration**

- D The RYA Child Protection Guidelines offer sample paperwork, a simple introduction to the subject, and a 2 page training handout for instructors (template P). They are available on the RYA website.
- F,G Accidents and near misses are events from which we can all learn. Recording them can therefore be very useful.

## **Clothing and Equipment**

- A, B Buoyancy aids are effective if they fit properly. This is much more important than their exact level of buoyancy.

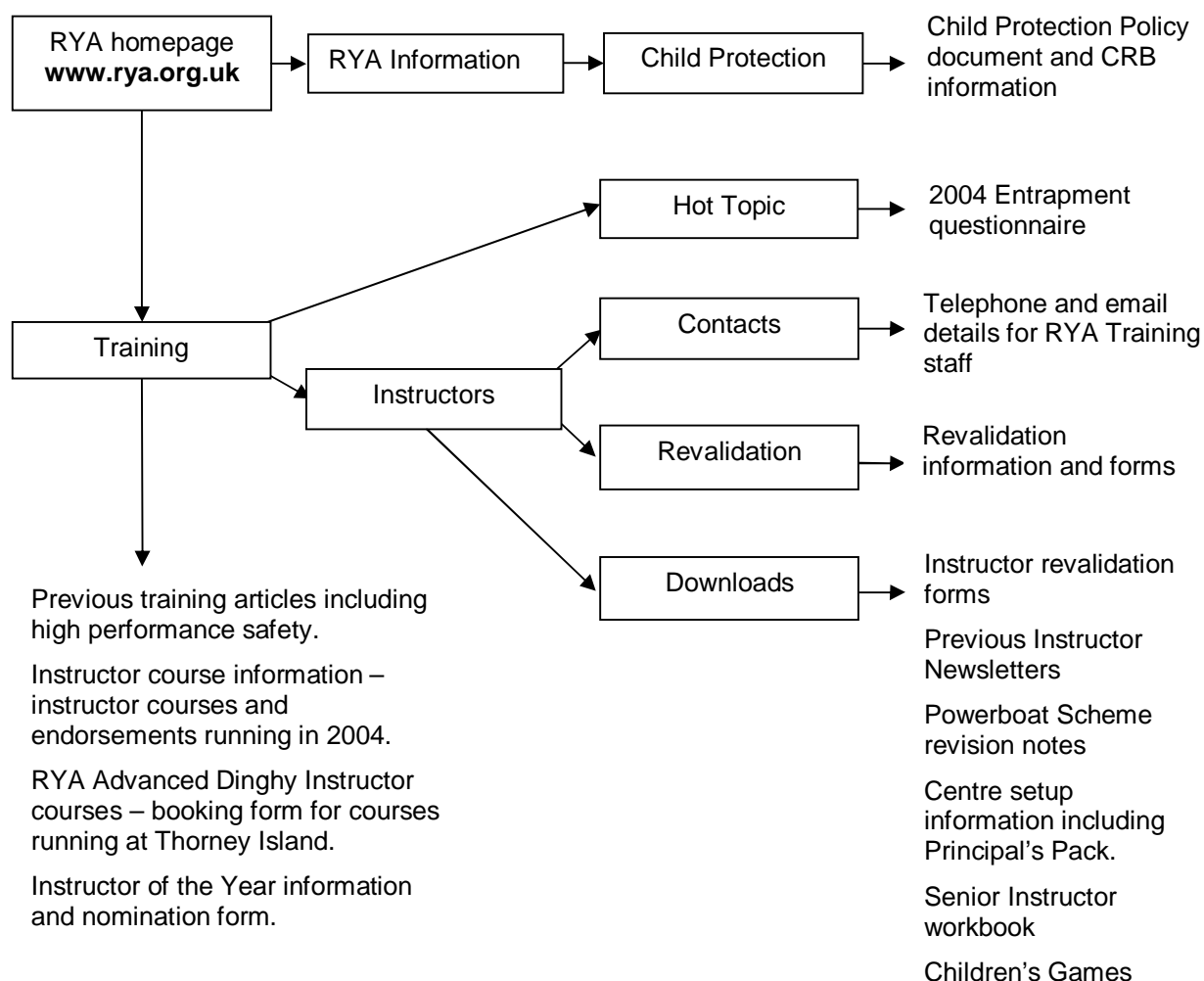
## APPENDIX 1

### RYA Website: Resources for Instructors

A number of resources for RYA Instructors can now be found on the RYA website – [www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk) - including the new restricted access Instructor area.

Again, your suggestions or contributions for further material are very welcome.

Below is a handy guide to where you can find useful information on the website.



To access the Instructors area of the website you will need to login or register. Instructors registering for the first time may find they cannot access the Instructor area immediately as data is scanned overnight to check the validity of Instructor qualifications.

## APPENDIX 2

### **Windsurfing Buoyancy - Policy Statement**

This statement has been prepared by the RYA Windsurfing Management Committee in response to an increasing number of requests from local councils, water authorities and sailing and windsurfing clubs for guidance on windsurfing buoyancy. Many are simply adopting the same recommendations, which apply to dinghy sailing.

Over recent years it has become common practice for those involved in windsurfing to use harnesses, which do not provide buoyancy of the same level, or with the same distribution as conventional buoyancy aids. This has been compounded by the use of lower waist or nappy harnesses which often provide little or no positive buoyancy.

The issue has been debated at length, particularly in the light of a draft European (CEN) Standard for buoyancy aids.

In preparing this statement, consideration has been given to the following points:-

1. The fundamental differences between dinghy sailing and windsurfing.
  - i) A board will normally stop close to the sailor in the event of an unintentional fall. The best form of buoyancy, in all but very exceptional cases, is thus next to the sailor. Therefore a means of rescue can be considered to be close at hand.
  - ii) Windsurfing is a total immersion activity. The participants expect to get wet and normally wear appropriate clothing. Dinghy sailors often wear normal clothing under waterproofs, which does not give any inherent buoyancy.
2. There is no evidence which suggests that the evolving common practice of wearing only lower harnesses is proving detrimental, nor that the wearing of conventional buoyancy has been a contributory factor in saving life. This is not to say that some individuals will not continue to wish to wear buoyancy aids.

Some argue strongly against the use of excess buoyancy on safety grounds as it can restrict movement in the water.
3. There is an obvious responsibility to give advice on safe practice to participants in the sport. At the same time we must avoid unnecessary local legislation which results in individual freedom being unnecessarily restricted or, indeed, unnecessary expense being incurred.
4. Recognition must be made of the difference between the proficient and novice windsurfer, particularly in relation to those being taught at RYA recognised teaching establishments. Equally, young people in the sport will need separate consideration.
5. Above all, windsurfing has shown itself to be an extremely safe activity.

#### **Thus the following is a statement of RYA policy on Windsurfing Buoyancy:**

1. Buoyancy aids of the waistcoat type, to the 50N (CEN) standard (approx. 5kg) buoyancy must be available to adult students under instruction at RYA levels 1 and 2 and they must be encouraged to wear them. For children or non-swimmers engaged in activity where close personal supervision by an instructor is impractical, a 100N garment with the support provided by 50N of inherent permanent buoyancy and 50N of inflatable buoyancy should be considered. The instructor at this stage has no evidence of the water competence of the student, and the student is unfamiliar with the surroundings. More experienced, individuals are capable of making their own decision as to the use of personal buoyancy.

2. The use of personal buoyancy for the competent, experienced windsurfer is a matter of personal choice. Windsurfing is accepted as a total immersion activity and the participants expect to fall in and to have to swim. The board itself, which will provide ample buoyancy, is normally immediately to hand after a fall and may be considered as the prime means of rescue. There is no evidence that the wearing of waist or nappy harnesses, which is becoming common practice amongst more proficient windsurfers, is proving dangerous.
3. Clothing appropriate to the prevailing conditions is a most important aspect of safety. In the UK the air and water temperatures are such that a wetsuit or drysuit is nearly always essential. In winter, a dry suit, or wetsuit providing an insulation of least 5mm around the body should be worn.
4. All windsurfers should carry a means of signalling distress. In inland or enclosed waters this should be a day-glo orange flag. In coastal waters a day-glo orange flag should be carried and a distress flare also considered if sailing in remote locations, in offshore winds, or at a distance of more than half a mile from the shore.
5. All windsurfers should carry a spare line, with which a board may be towed and which can be used as a replacement outhaul or inhaul.