Daradgee Environmental Education Centre

Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment

Activity Details

CARA Creation Date: 03-Nov-2026			
Activity:	**Swimming in locations other than pools**		
Activity Scope:	Guideline review date: 21 April 2026 This guideline demonstrates the minimum safety standard for student participation in curriculum activities conducted in locations other than swimming pools e.g. water safety education program, skill practice sessions. Such locations include clear, shallow, calm and confined swimming areas at natural venues (e.g. dams and non-surf beaches), clear, deep and/or flowing swimming areas (e.g. lakes, rivers, deep non-surf beaches and dams), bodies of water exposed to currents, strong winds, large waves and/or access to open waters (e.g. beaches exposed to rip and swell conditions, and lakes or rivers exposed to currents). Activities that pose an unacceptable risk to students are not recommended as part of a swimming education program. These activities include, but are not limited to, unstructured free-swim activities and breath-holding/underwater games. The Department of Education is committed to ensuring that curriculum activities are planned for and managed in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld), to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of students, staff and others. For swimming activities in pools, use the CARA guideline for swimming in pools. Depending on the scope of this activity, other risk assessments may be required when planning. Curriculum activities encompassing more than one CARA guideline (e.g. swimming in locations other than pools while camping) must comply with the requirements of all CARA guidelines appropriate to the activity. For activities conducted at a non-Department of Education venue, and/or when engaging external expertise, request written risk assessment advice and attach it to this CARA record. For activities conducted off-site, schools must comply with the school excursions procedure. For activities conducted as part of representative school sport programs, schools should consult with Queensland School Sport.		
Guidelines:	https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling/CARA/activity-guidelines/swimming-locations-other-than-pools		
Activity Description:	Swimming and wading in public swimming areas at Babinda Boulders whilst wearing life jackets.		
Inherent Risk Level:	High		
Inherent Risk Level Description:	Activities conducted in a water location other than a swimming pool.		
Start Date:	Tuesday, 03 November, 2026	End Date:	Monday, 22 November, 2027
On School Grounds:	No	Is parental permission required for this activity?	Yes

Activity Requirements	
• If any requirement cannot be met, the activity must not occur. • A registered teacher must be appointed to maintain overall responsibility for the activity. • Teachers, in collaboration with other adult supervisors of the planned activity, determine additional risks, hazards and control measures relevant to the activity and the specific school/group circumstances in order to lift the safety standard above the minimum identified in the CARA guideline. Consult review comments from previous CARA records to improve safety standards based on the advice from the previous supervisors of the activity at the school. • Prior consultation and collaboration with local expertise (e.g. lifeguard service, marine park managers) for local advice, emergency support mechanisms and additional supervision requirements to ensure participant and public safety.	☑
Students • Schools must consider age, maturity and skill level of students when planning curriculum activities. Consult the sequence of competency found in the water safety education program for guidance at each year/band level. • Adjustments are required for students with disability to support access and participation in the curriculum. Consult with the parents/carers of students with disability, or when appropriate the student, to ensure risks related to their child's participation in the activity are identified and managed. • Schools must consult current student medical information and/or health plans in accordance with the managing students' health support needs at school procedure. Record information about any student condition (e.g. physical or medical, such as epilepsy) that may inhibit safe engagement in the activity and include specific support measures within emergency procedures. • For activities with students with a medical condition or disability that may impact on safety during the activity, consultation with parents is required prior to allocating supervision to determine the impact of students' medical condition or disability on safety during the activity. • For participants with known allergies, schools must comply with the supporting students with asthma and/or at risk of anaphylaxis at school procedure and the school's anaphylaxis risk management plan, including an adult supervisor of the activity with anaphylaxis training.	☑
Emergency and first-aid • Emergency plans and injury management procedures must be established for foreseeable incidents (e.g. raising alarm, rescue process, provision of CPR and first aid) and incorporate the advice from local authorities. (e.g. location of AED, position and location of lifeguard). • Adult supervisors must have: ◦ emergency contact details of all participants ◦ a medical alert list and a process for administering student medication ◦ communication equipment in waterproof containers suitable to conditions (e.g. mobile phone) and a process for obtaining external assistance and/or receiving emergency advice. • Safety procedures must be determined for the location (e.g. water entry/exit, out of bounds areas) and incorporate advice from local authorities, SLSA's Beachsafe and/or RLSSQ's Guidelines for Inland Waterways Safety (GIWS) as appropriate. • Ready access is required to buoyant and rescue aids appropriate to the location e.g. light-weight poles/water noodles/ropes with a float attached for shallow, calm swimming areas or a rescue tube/board for bodies of water exposed to rips, waves or currents. • Access is required to first aid equipment and consumables suitable for foreseeable incidents.	☑

Induction and instruction • Induction is required for all adult supervisors on emergency procedures (e.g. hand up for assistance, raising alarm, rescue process), safety procedures (e.g. active and direct supervision for each supervisory role, whistle blasts and their meaning, water entry/exit) and correct techniques. If the activity is conducted at an off-site facility, induction is to be informed by advice provided in consultation with expertise at the venue. • Instruction is required for students on safety procedures and correct techniques (e.g. buddy up, water entry) to ensure preliminary water safety knowledge and learning prior to entering the water. Rule-reminders are to be provided throughout the activity.	☑
Consent Parent consent is required for all activities conducted off-site and all extreme risk level activities conducted onsite. It is strongly recommended that parent consent is obtained for high risk level activities conducted on-site.	☑

Risk Management Details

Supervision	
Principals, in consultation with the qualified adults, make final supervision decisions for the activity that considers the local context.	
Appropriate adult supervision must be provided to manage the activity safely i.e. prevent an incident from occurring and manage an incident if one were to occur, including managing emergency situations. At no time should students be relied upon to recover a person in difficulty. The principal must give active consideration to the minimum standards set in the CARA guideline for the activity, the CARA planner and the risk assessment when determining the appropriate level of supervision. **See Number of adult supervisors (below).** Prepare a supervision plan to prevent drowning that considers the advice provided in this CARA guideline. Consider SLSA's Beachsafe and/or RLSSQ's Guidelines for Inland Waterways Safety for support when supervision planning. Where a lifeguard service is available, schools are to collaborate with the lifeguard on the contents of the CARA record prior to the activity for advice and to address any queries they may have. **Note**: The presence of a lifeguard service does not absolve the school of any supervision requirements unless secured for the sole purpose of the activity. Participants must adhere to all rules and advice communicated by the local lifeguard service, facility operator/owner and any safety signage at the facility/location. Before the activity, all adult supervisors: • must be familiar with the contents of the CARA record, including the Emergency and Supervision Plans • must assess weather conditions, and obtain accurate information on tides, depths, currents and other expected water conditions (if applicable) prior to undertaking the activity, inspecting the intended location in order to identify variable risks, hazards and potential dangers. During the activity, all adult supervisors: • must provide active and direct supervision – be constantly vigilant, attentive and rescue ready • must comply with control measures from the CARA record and adapt as hazards arise • must not rely on students to recover a person in difficulty at any time. The activity must be suspended if the conditions become unfavourable (e.g. poor visibility, extreme	☑

temperatures, thunderstorms).

Number of adult supervisors

Principals, in consultation with the qualified adults of the activity, determine the final number of supervisors to fulfil instructional, emergency and supervision roles for the local context that consider SLSA's Beachsafe and/or RLSSQ's Guidelines for Inland Waterways Safety, the nature of the activity, students' ages, abilities and specialised learning, access and/or health needs. In some instances, the final supervision ratio may be 1:1.

To support decisions about the number of qualified adults required for the activity, confirmation of student water safety and swimming ability is required prior to participation. See FAQ's for further support. The process is determined by the school and must consider the specific aquatic environments in which the activity will take place. Consult the sequence of competency water safety education program for support in determining age-appropriate suitability and consider student self-rescue skills in the specific aquatic environment.

Minimum standards for supervising students in the water

2 x qualified adults for up to 10 students in the water + 1 x additional qualified adult for up to every 10 students thereafter (e.g. 20 students = 3 qualified adults).

At least 1 adult at the venue is required to have current recovery/emergency competence and be quickly accessible to the activity area, be easily identifiable, and carry a device (e.g. whistle) to raise an alarm using agreed-on signals. Current recovery/emergency competence may be held by any qualified adult as part of a broader qualification (e.g. swimming teacher or lifeguard qualifications).

If the minimum standard for supervision cannot be met, modify the activity (or elements of it) and/or identify and use the hierarchy of controls to implement alternative control measures to meet or exceed the minimum safety standard (e.g. reduce the number of students in the water at any one time).

*See FAQ's for further support.

Note: Consideration of the risks associated with the specific aquatic environment where the activity is to take place should account for the adult supervisors' capability, relevance and currency.
At Babinda Boulders, all students and staff are expected to comply with the relevant signage and not swim in the 'no swim' areas. All adults will be asked to help supervise students and will be spread out in the designated swimming area. In an emergency, adults will need to take on different roles: driver goes to where signal can be found to call 000, 1-2 trained adults perform CPR
if required and applies a defibrillator if available, another adult clears the water and removes students to a safe place and remaining adults assist in supervision or CPR and another school staff member will remove remaining students away from where CPR is being performed. A DEEC staff member will carry a rescue tube, whistle, continually scan students and carry out head counts. All visiting staff members must remain vigilant and scan the waterway intermittently.

Supervisor Qualifications

Qualifications support the minimum safety standard for this activity. Principals make final decisions* in determining supervisor capability (competence, relevance and currency) and are responsible for encouraging and enabling school-based activity supervisors to raise their qualifications to improve safety standards. Support for decision-making is provided by industry standards e.g. RLSQ's Guidelines for Inland Waterways Safety. *See FAQ's for further support.	
All adult supervisors must comply with the working with children authority – blue cards procedure.	☑

Qualified adults for the activity **Recovery/emergency – CPR, First aid, Rescue**	
At least 1 adult supervisor is required to have current knowledge, judgement, technique and physical ability to carry out safe water rescues and enact an emergency procedure. Recovery/emergency ability includes a current qualification or skillset (e.g. Inland Open Water Lifeguard, Certificate III in Sport, Aquatics and Recreation) with the following units of competency (or similar): • HLTAID011 Provide first aid • SISCAQU019 Supervise clients in aquatic locations • SISCAQU021 Perform complex water rescues • SISCAQU022 Provide oxygen resuscitation and therapy in an aquatic environment • SISCAQU029 Perform open water rescues.	☑
Water safety education lessons - swimming teacher qualification	
Supervisors, including registered teachers, engaged to provide water safety education lessons are to have, or be enrolled in and working towards, a Swimming Teacher qualification that demonstrates the following units of competency: • SISCAQU023 Plan swimming lessons • SISCAQU024 Teach water familiarisation, buoyancy and mobility skills • SISCAQU025 Teach water safety and survival skills • SISCAQU026 Teach swimming strokes	☐
Dive entries	
• Ensure the skill of diving is taught by, or under the direct supervision of, a qualified coach (e.g. development coach External link accreditation with Swimming Australia) or other qualified person complying with AUSTSWIM diving position statement July 2024 (PDF, 1MB) External link. • Only students who have been taught and assessed as competent in dive starts should dive into the water, including during swimming carnivals. • Prohibit dive starts for those divers assessed as competent if the required depth or forward clearance is not available. • Consult Royal Life Saving Australia Interpreting Safe Diving Guidelines and Safe diving - Summary of key information for more information.	☐
Contact registered training organisations e.g. RLSSQ, AUSTSWIM, SWIM Coaches & Teachers Australia for enrolment assistance.	☐
Additional competencies	
For students under 5yo – SISCAQU027 Promote development of infants and toddlers in an aquatic environment skill set or similar	☑
For activities with students with a medical condition or disability that may impact on safety in the water – SISCAQU028 Assist participants with disability during aquatic activities unit of competency or similar	☑

Any other curriculum activity conducted in locations other than pools – Aquatic supervision qualification Supervisors, including registered teachers, engaged to conduct any other curriculum activities in locations other than pools may hold either:	
Swimming teacher qualification, as outlined above	☑
another qualification that demonstrates current aquatic supervision knowledge and skills, such as SISCAQU019 Supervise clients in aquatic locations unit of competency or similar	☑
DEEC teachers do not provide water safety ed lessons (swimming teacher) and we do not teach dive lessons either. We do hold Inland Open Water Lifeguard qualification as required for this CARA.	

Facilities and Equipment

The qualified adult supervisor of the activity, in consultation with the principal, determines the requirements for facilities and equipment appropriate to the local context.	
Assess suitability of surrounds and reach of water when selecting a location. Consider local water conditions and foreseeable hazards such as; • tidal flow, currents and turbulence • use by other watercraft and traffic patterns • water temperature, depth and visibility • underwater hazards (e.g. rocks and rapids, turbulence from a waterfall) • dangerous marine life.	☑
Diving activities Consult Royal Life Saving Australia Interpreting Safe Diving Guidelines and Safe diving - Summary of key information for minimum water depth and minimum forward clearance requirements.	☐
A working emergency signal (e.g. whistle, air horn) must be available.	☑
In open water, a pontoon, boat or float must be in close proximity to students.	☑
Diving activities are not rendered during a trip to The Boulders.	

Hazards and Control Measures

Environmental hazards	
Biological hazards - Body fluids (e.g. blood, bowel motions) • Manage open wounds before, during and after the activity. Consult infection control guidelines and Queensland Health's exclusion periods for infectious conditions poster for first aid and hygienic practices. • Identify appropriate swimming continence aids for students unable to manage their bodily functions.	☑

Dangerous marine life - e.g. crocodiles, sharks, stonefish, marine stingers, stonefish, sea snakes, blue-ringed octopus, cone shells, cyanobacteria, coral (scrapes) • Check with the local authority (e.g. local government) for the presence of known water contaminants (e.g. blue-green algae) or other marine hazards (e.g. stonefish) at the location. • Look for and obey warnings and/or safety signs. • Follow Queensland Government dangerous marine life and Surf Life Saving Queensland marine stinger safety advice. • Marine organisms are not to be handled and contact is to be avoided. • Continually assess threat of dangerous marine life. Immediately move the participants to a safe location if dangerous marine life is detected or suspected. • Ensure stinger suits and/or footwear is worn in the water when appropriate (e.g. enclosed footwear with thick soles when swimming in creeks or estuaries where dangers such as stonefish may be present).	☑
Environmental conditions - Weather, sun, humidity, wind • Assess weather conditions prior to undertaking the activity, inspecting the intended location in order to identify variable risks, hazards and potential dangers. • Follow the school's sun safety policy, including appropriate swimwear (e.g. swim shirts), sun protection (e.g. sunscreen) and shade facilities when outside. • Follow the managing excessive heat in schools guidelines when participating in very hot or extreme heat conditions. • Continuously monitor conditions for emerging rips, strong currents, turbulence and under tows. Cease activities when environmental warnings have been issued (e.g. local government or lifeguard warning).	☑
Water contamination - (Parasites, water borne diseases, chemical run off, algal blooms) • Check with the local authority for the presence of known water contaminants (e.g. effluent) or other marine hazards at the location.	☑
Water temperature • Manage cooler water temperatures with additional control measures e.g. shorter in-water time, wetsuits etc. Note: sudden temperature changes may trigger seizures.	☑
Facilities and equipment hazards	
Activity Location • Location must be suitable for the activity being undertaken to ensure safe participation and that safety rules and procedures can be followed. Undertake a reconnaissance of new or infrequently used venues to ascertain suitability. • Clearly define the swimming area of an appropriate depth considering student age and ability. Depending on the location, rope floats or anchored buoys linked with ropes should be used to define the swimming boundary.	☑
Entry/exit points • Use the designated swimming areas when conducting the activity on patrolled beaches. • Establish appropriate entry and exit points at the water's edge.	☑

Instructional aids • If used, check personal flotation devices (e.g. lifejackets) and/or instructional aids (e.g. pool noodles) are fit for purpose, appropriate to students' size and weight (e.g. conforming to Australian Standards AS 4758). Check for damage before use. • Do not use aquatic toys as instructional aids. Adhere to the warning labels/packaging and follow instructions for assembly and use. • Prevent participants from swimming under pontoons, boats and platforms.	☑
Manual handling - Lifting equipment, manipulating/moving students • Use correct manual handling processes when lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling or carrying.	☑
Vessels • If present, continually assess threat of vessels.	☑
Student considerations	
Deep water - Risk of drowning, submersion • Allocate safe swimming areas (e.g. shallow water, near water's edge) for non-confident or reluctant swimmers. • Consult the water safety education program for guidance at each year/band level to: ◦ provide learning experiences appropriate to swimming confidence, age and competence. ◦ ensure depth of water is appropriate to swimming competence and age. • Closely monitor students in deep water. Only allow competent swimmers to swim underwater. Restrict underwater swimming to short-duration activities under close supervision. Note: the water safety education program begins using breaststroke approach to swim down and touch bottom in the year 3 and 4 band. • Restrict access if turbulence may be expected (e.g. where a waterfall empties into deep water).	☑
Entanglement - Underwater structures, weed, debris • Assess the location for entanglement hazards before each session. • Modify the activity or the location to avoid hazards.	☑
Hyperventilation • Encourage participants to take a full/deep breath before submerging and ensure exhalation whilst underwater. • Closely monitor students for involuntary multiple, shallow breaths. • Do not allow competitive breath-holding or 'no-breath' underwater games. Consult the FAQs for further information.	☑
Injury • Students aware of the location of emergency and first-aid equipment.	☑
Physical exertion - Exhaustion and fatigue • Consider PFD or other buoyancy aids to avoid exertion. • Conduct warm-up/cool-down activities. • Continually monitor participants for signs of fatigue and exhaustion. • Ensure drink breaks occur regularly. Make water available for individual participants between drink breaks.	☑

Student issues - Student numbers, special needs, high risk behaviours, medical conditions, separation from the group • Ensure all students in the water are in sight of at least 1 qualified adult supervisor at all times. • Ensure each student under 5 years of age and non-swimmers remain within arm's reach of an adult supervisor at all times. Closely monitor students with health support needs. • Implement procedures (e.g. buddy system, roll marking mechanisms) to account for all participants. • Limit the number of students in the water when close supervision is required. • Keep non-participants away from the water and do not cause a distraction. • Monitor shared facilities e.g. change rooms, public access areas.	☑
Swimming attire - Visibility, fabrics • All supervisors are to be readily identifiable and be appropriately dressed to perform an immediate rescue at all times. • Students wear fit-for-purpose swimming attire that is highly visible in water and does not cause a hazard i.e. not too loose or heavy. • Each student must provide their own towel. • Students wear swimming caps or wear hair back if hair poses a hazard - consider type material as a drowning / suffocation risk. • Do not allow students to misuse swimming caps or equipment e.g. do not pull swimming caps over faces, do not use rescue ropes for any purpose other than rescue or simulation. • Remove accessories (e.g. jewellery, lanyards) before participating.	☑
Water entry • Do not allow diving activities unless under supervision of a qualified coach (e.g. Development coach accreditation with Surf Life Saving Qld) or other qualified person complying with AUSTSWIM Diving position statement July 2024.	☑
Visibility • Strongly encourage students to have high-visibility swimming attire. • Ensure staff can easily recognise those students with health support needs (in and out of the water) and are familiar with their needs.	☑
Additional links Water Safety Education - Department of Education funding Royal Life Saving Society - Swim and survive, Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations subscription, National Swimming and water safety framework Surf Life Saving Australia Australian Water Safety Council Epilepsy Queensland	

Babinda Boulders: first aid kit needs to be readily available. There are no bullrouts at Babinda Boulders. Be aware that there is a multi-purpose health centre at 128 Munro Street, Babinda if it is required.
DEEC teacher will explain where students may swim and provide information on where shallow and deep areas are. All students from F-year 10 are to wear life jackets at Babinda boulders.
Buddy checks (blow whistle, freeze, point to buddy, hand raised if buddy not found), frequent head counts.
All students from F-year 9 are to wear life jackets.
Polly Creek: first aid kit and consumable items (e.g. hot water for bullrout stings) need to be readily available.
At risk swimmer identification - identification of non-swimmers, students with relevant medical action plans will be determined.

Buddy checks - blow whistle, freeze, point to buddy, frequent head counts. Life jackets to be worn by all. Defibrillator to be taken to excursion site and kept in DEEC vehicle.

Approval Details

Approval Status: Approved			
Approval Officer Name:	**Matthews, Amanda**	Approval Date:	**03-Nov-2026**

Planning Considerations

Which students will be involved?

- Consider the number of students, size of student groups and students' capabilities e.g. age, experience, competence, fitness, maturity.
- Consider any individual student needs e.g. personalised learning, support provisions (including behaviour support plans), health management (including health plans and prescribed medication requirements).

Where will the students be?

- Consider the location of the activity e.g. remote/easily accessible, public /private, school/classroom/workshop/other.
- Is the number of students appropriate for the available space?
- If outdoors – sunsafe strategies are implemented; weather and environmental conditions are assessed before and during activity (e.g. temperature, storms, water currents, tides); and strategies to reduce the likelihood of viruses, allergies and skin infections caused by insects (e.g. ticks, mosquitoes, spiders) and other animals are applied.
- The site is checked for hazards (e.g. poisonous plants, dangerous animals, uneven terrain, barbed wire,) and necessary controls implemented.
- Activities are appropriately situated in relation to buildings, pedestrians, members of the public, vehicles and other activities e.g. designated areas for activity, spectators and vehicles are established.

What will the students be doing?

- Consider the nature and duration of the activity i.e. need for drinking water, food, rest, appropriate clothing, warm-up and warm-down.
- Instruction in rules and pre-requisite skills is provided.
- Student skills are developed in a progressive and sequential manner.
- First aid and emergency medical treatment provisions are appropriate for the type of activity and location e.g. first aid kit, first aid trained personnel, Ventolin®, Epipen®, and students' personal prescribed medications as required in health plans are available.
- Emergency response strategies are in place e.g. communication plans (e.g. mobile phone, walkie talkie), safety induction, evacuation plans.
- Hair, clothing, footwear and jewellery are worn in a manner that is appropriate and safe for the activity.
- Personal items, e.g. drink bottles, towels and mouthguards, will not be shared between students.

What will the students be using?

- Instruction in safety procedures and safe handling of equipment is provided.
- Equipment is suitable for the activity, properly maintained, appropriately used and complies with the relevant safety standard.
- Relevant department procedures and guidelines are adhered to for the use of equipment and work processes.

Who will be leading the activity?

- A registered teacher has overall responsibility for the activity.
- Sufficient adult supervision is in place to manage the activity safely (including in emergency situations).
- The activity leader has the competence (knowledge and skills) to plan, induct, instruct and manage the activity safely for students and others.
- There are sufficient adults present with current First Aid qualifications (including CPR) or ready access to qualified first aid personnel.
- Blue Card requirements are adhered to for leaders/volunteers.

☑ I have incorporated the above factors when planning my risk management strategies for this activity.

☑ Additional activity-specific requirements for students with specialised learning needs are provided in the Other Details box below.

Individual student needs - Students' specialised learning/ behaviour/ health needs are considered and strategies are developed in collaboration with relevant school staff prior to attending camp and participating in this activity.