

Safety Plan - Reading University Head of the River.

This is distributed to coaches, competitors, organisers, marshals, and safety personnel. This paper is to be read and understood with reference to the British Rowing Water Safety Code.

- Reading University Head Race is run under the British Rowing rules of racing.
- It is the responsibility of Clubs, their coaches, and individual athletes to ensure that their equipment complies with the requirements of the Water Safety Code.
- Coaches of junior crews are expected to act in *loco parentis*, and to undertake pre-race assessment of their boats and crews for safety.
- It is the responsibility of individual athletes and their coaches to ensure that they are dressed appropriately for prevailing weather conditions. Athletes inappropriately attired for the weather conditions may be excluded from racing. The use of “space blankets” by crews waiting at the start is encouraged.
- Boats will be inspected at random by race officials. Boats that fail to comply with the Water Safety Code will be excluded from their division.
- All Crews must comply with the rules of racing as laid out in the Competitor’s instructions.
- Boats designed to have watertight hatches and/or bungs must have these in place and correctly fitted.
- Participants who are aware of their having a health problem that could endanger themselves or other competitors must advise race officials of their condition before they boat. The race committee retains the right to not allow a competitor to race if in their opinion the condition constitutes an unacceptable risk.
- The *Race Committee* will decide if weather conditions demand that the race be halted or prevented from being started.
- In the case of novice or inexperienced crew or coxes, if an umpire or marshal assesses them as not being competent to race, they may not be allowed to continue to the start.
- All launches will contain radios, to permit communications with each other as well as with race control; plus, safety equipment as specified in the Water safety Code.
- On water safety cover will be deployed 90mins before the start of each division. The safety and marshalling boats will follow the last crew in each division back to the finish/boating area.
- Bank marshals will be in place to provide line of sight cover for the whole course from 45 minutes prior to the start of the division, until the last boat in that division has cleared the area for which that marshal is responsible.
- Medical staff will be located at Reading University Boat House for the day.
- First aid kits are in the first floor of the Reading University Boat House and on board all launches.
- A radio system will be in operation that connects the safety boats along the course with race control. In the event of radio failure, mobile phones will be used as backup. All umpires, marshals and safety personnel should carry a copy of the list of important telephone numbers. This will also be displayed at the boathouse.
- In the event of an incident on the water competitors must first ensure their own safety before alerting the nearest umpire or official. The Umpire or official closest to the incident point will assess if the race needs to be stopped. If the decision has been made to stop the race, then this must be communicated to all other umpires and marshals via the radio system who should then communicate this to the crews in proximity to them. The Umpire closest to the incident point should then summon assistance as required and manage the incident site.
- In the event of an injury, the nearest race official will determine the severity of the injury, deciding whether to refer the individual to a first-aider or summon the emergency services.
- Any individual who has sustained a minor injury will be returned to Reading University Boat House by a safety launch that will notify race control of the incident. Race control will arrange the appropriate medical attention.
- In the event of an injury, Race Control should still be informed. Medical staff and/or a qualified first aider will be summoned.
- Race Control must be informed of any accident, collision or capsized. A British Rowing incident report form must be completed *before* leaving. Forms will be available at Race Control.

In the event of a serious incident call 999 immediately. Do not wait for first-aiders or medical staff to arrive. REMEMBER: since a conventional ambulance may not be able to reach the riverbank, you may need to ask for the air ambulance.