

Northern Phoenix Paddling Club

Training Policy



Purpose

The purpose of this Training Policy is to set clear expectations for paddlers, coaches, sweeps, and team management in all matters related to training.

It outlines how training is planned, delivered, and participated in, including logistics, communication, and the connection between training commitments and competing.

Northern Phoenix Values

Respect

Training is conducted in a way that upholds the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of every member. Respectful behaviour includes listening to coaches and sweeps, following training instructions, using equipment responsibly, and supporting a positive training environment for all paddlers.

Inclusive

Inclusive practice means providing clear information, ensuring members understand training expectations, and creating an environment where everyone feels confident to participate, ask questions, and seek guidance.

Support

We look out for one another during all training activities. Support includes encouraging teammates, offering constructive feedback, reporting concerns, and helping others understand training requirements. Coaches and sweeps provide guidance that strengthens paddler development and wellbeing.

Enjoy

Training should be enjoyable, motivating, and something members look forward to. Enjoyment grows when sessions are well-organised, communication is positive, and paddlers feel connected, safe, and valued. We celebrate progress, effort, and shared experiences across all training environments.

Applies to

This Training Policy applies to all individuals involved in any training activity undertaken by Northern Phoenix Paddling Club. This includes:

- **All Members** — paddlers, and anyone participating in club training sessions or related preparation.

- **Coaches** — responsible for planning and delivering training, providing guidance, and ensuring sessions align with club values and safety requirements.
- **Sweeps** — responsible for on-water safety, session control, and making operational (safety related) decisions during training.
- **Team Managers** — responsible for training logistics, communication, attendance management, and ensuring training commitments link appropriately to competition requirements.
- **Committee Members** — responsible for governance oversight, ensuring training practices align with club policies, values, and safety expectations.

This policy applies to all forms of training, including on-water sessions, land-based fitness, technique development, team preparation, and any activity connected to training commitments for competition.

Policy information

Consistency & Attendance

Training must be attended regularly to support team development, selection decisions, and competition readiness. Each member must communicate standard availability limitations (i.e. for work commitments) at the start of each training season and whenever there is a significant / consistent change.

One off absenteeism is expected to be communicated to team management via approved and well understood channels. Communication of absenteeism must not be done in any manner that may impact the enthusiasm of other team members to attend for example via shared chat groups.

Members who fail to attend training for a continuous period of 4 weeks with no contact may risk their membership being terminated on the assumption of abandonment. No reimbursement of membership fees will be provided in this situation. A decision to terminate membership can only be made by the club committee.

Training Programme

General training programme intentions must be communicated to all members at appropriate times during training seasons. Programmes must be designed (and adapted where necessary) to account for different learning styles, pre-agreed absenteeism and take account of varying experience levels.

Members must be provided with constructive feedback on their personal development, all reasonable requests from members for additional coaching/training/development must be considered. Where requests cannot reasonably be met, clear communication as to why must be provided.

Competition Alignment

Commitment (with attendance carrying the greatest weighting) to training sessions may result in selection preference when competing.

The general expectation of attendance is to be present for at least 50% of scheduled training sessions in any week. For example, if there are two scheduled training sessions in a week, to achieve at least 50% attendance a member should aim to attend one of those two sessions. Where there are three scheduled sessions in a week a member should aim to attend two.

The coaching team should proactively address slippage in training attendance through timely one on one communication.

Decisions around attendance and competition alignment will always need to be made in conjunction with operational necessity such as male / female ratios required to participate in racing.

Paddler inactivity may risk the ability to compete. A recommendation to exclude a paddler from competing in an event will be made by the coaching team and considered by the committee on a case by case basis.

Competition Alignment Communication

Coaches must ensure decisions related to competition alignment are communicated to members as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to competitions. There must be a 'no surprises' approach taken to competition alignment.

Roles & Responsibilities

Committee

The Committee is responsible for governance oversight of all training activity. This includes ensuring training practices align with club policies, values, and safety requirements, approving training-related decisions where needed, and supporting coaches, sweeps, and team management with guidance on matters that affect member wellbeing, fairness, or competition preparation.

Team Strategy Group

Led by the Team Strategy Officer, this group oversees operational training direction. They ensure training plans, communication, and decisions are consistent with club values and support paddler development. They may develop guidelines for training communication or logistics and must uphold a "no surprises" approach for decisions affecting paddler performance, selection, or role changes.

People Group

Led by the People Officer, this group ensures club agreed priorities related to member wellbeing and any associated member retention strategy is upheld through effective liaising with the Team Strategy Group.

Team Manager

The Team Manager is responsible for training logistics, attendance management, and ensuring training commitments align with competition requirements. They coordinate schedules, communicate changes, manage registration information relevant to training

readiness, and ensure operational requirements from Aoraki or NZDBA are met during training and events.

Coaches

Coaches plan and deliver training sessions that support skill development, fitness, teamwork, and competition preparation. They ensure training is safe, structured, and aligned with club values. Coaches provide clear guidance, assess paddler readiness, and work with sweeps and team management to make training decisions, including weather-related calls.

Sweeps

Sweeps hold on-water authority during training. They conduct safety briefings, manage boat control, and make decisions related to safety, weather, and paddler wellbeing. Sweeps may request any paddler to exit the boat if safety is a concern and must ensure all training activity follows recognised dragon boating safety practices.

All Members

All paddlers are responsible for attending training consistently, communicating absences, maintaining personal fitness, and participating in ways that uphold club values. Members must follow coach and sweep instructions, use equipment responsibly, assess their own readiness and swimming ability, and report any safety or wellbeing concerns promptly.

Supporting information

Northern Phoenix Constitution

All relevant sections

Related Policies

Health & Safety

Communication

Other related information

Code of conduct