



LIFESAVING AWARDS INITIATIVE SCENARIOS

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An initiative is a simulated emergency situation to which a candidate is tested on their response. An initiative test provides an opportunity to assess a candidate's judgement using a combination of their knowledge, fitness and practical skills.

Initiative tests assist candidates to use all available information, assess its relevance to the emergency situation and make decisions on the best course of action. The candidate will need to decide which casualties to rescue first, what techniques or equipment to use and when to call for assistance from bystanders or emergency services.

Simple initiative tests can be used to start to develop judgement skills progressively. Once candidates have learnt some basic rescue skills such as a reach rescue or a throw rescue, initiative tests can be implemented. These tests force decisions to be made on which rescue method may be most effective in rescuing a training partner simulating a person in difficulty. A good method of learning how to recognise categories of people in difficulty is through simulation. By acting the role of a person in difficulty, the candidate may develop recognition skills more effectively.

Initiative tests need not be complex and should be realistic to the types of scenarios a person may come across. Even providing a simple scenario the trainee rescuer will be faced with the following decisions:

- Recognising the type of casualties in difficulty.
- What rescue aids are available.
- Which rescue aid is most appropriate for each casualty or scenario.
- What entry or approach to use.
- What rescue technique to use.
- Which person to rescue first.
- When to call for help.

Setting up initiatives

The following points should be considered when setting up an initiative:

1. The level of lifesaving skill and knowledge of the candidates.
2. The location and general situation whether actual or imagined.
3. The number of casualties stated in the award item.
4. The type of casualty: non-swimmer, weak swimmer, injured person or unconscious person, person with suspected spinal injury in shallow water.
5. Location of casualties in the water: distance from safety, caught in a current etc.
6. Changes in casualty status during the rescue.
7. The types, number and location of rescue aids available.
8. Whether or not there are any bystanders nearby.
9. The skills and knowledge of any bystanders.
10. The boundaries for the initiative.

During the initiative

The following points should be considered during the initiative test:

1. Did the candidate make an adequate assessment of the scenario they were faced with?
2. Did the candidate practise self-preservation prior, during and post rescue?
3. Did the candidate remove any bystanders from danger?
4. Did the candidate utilise any available bystanders effectively with clear instructions?
5. Did the candidate utilise any available rescue aids and were they used effectively?
6. Did the candidate perform the rescues quickly and efficiently?
7. Did the candidate rescue all casualties and provide appropriate after care?
8. Did the candidate recognise injuries and handle appropriately as to not cause further injury?
9. Did the candidate perform CPR if required?
10. Did the candidate contact emergency services as required?

If prompts are required during the initiative, these should be given at the appropriate time to assist with continuing with the rescue. For example: In a scenario where CPR needs to be provided; once the candidate has checked for breathing, the prompt 'not breathing normally' or 'breathing normally' should be given so the candidate can continue with the appropriate action.

After the initiative

To get an understanding of the candidate's judgement skills, the following points may be discussed:

1. Ask the candidate to explain their understanding of the emergency scenario.
2. Ask the candidate to explain the reasoning behind their actions in performing the simulated rescue.
3. Ask the candidate upon reflection, was there anything they may have done differently or they thought they could further improve on.
4. Provide constructive feedback to the candidate on aspects of the rescue that were well executed and areas that required further improvement.

General Points

Where appropriate, the rescuer should:

- Calm and reassure casualties throughout the rescue.
- Encourage self-help with positive instruction (e.g. "kick your legs, you're not far from safety", "keep calm, you're doing well").
- Keep casualties in view while assessing and then carrying out rescues.
- Positively direct bystanders to assist.
- Ensure they stay safe themselves by using actions and techniques that suit their own ability, fitness and knowledge.



SAMPLE INITIATIVE SCENARIOS

The sample initiative scenarios have been created to provide examples that can be used to test the ability and judgement skills of candidates. Those candidates playing the role of a casualty should be thoroughly briefed to create the most realistic initiative for the rescuer. The sample initiatives are designed for the simulated rescue to take place at a swimming pool but may be modified for other aquatic locations. Examiners should select and /or develop scenarios that reflect the aquatic environments and recreational activities the candidates will visit or undertake.

Scenario

This describes the simulated initiative location and emergency situation.

Pool location

This is the location at the aquatic venue where the simulated rescue takes place.

Equipment

The equipment that is available to the rescuer for the initiative.

Casualty brief

This will outline the role for each casualty in the scenario.

Rescuer brief

This will outline the information to provide to the candidate who is performing the rescue.

INITIATIVE SCENARIO 1

Scenario	Swimming Pool: Two swimmers are in the local pool, one swimming backstroke and the other freestyle. They have a collision.
Pool location	The collision occurs in the middle lanes approximately 10 metres from the end of the pool.
Equipment	Kickboards at pool end. Broom and bucket on side. Rope on lane rope reels.
Casualty brief	Casualty 1 – You are swimming freestyle when you collide with a person swimming backstroke. You feel intense pain and react violently if the injured arm is touched. Casualty 2 – You are swimming backstroke when you collide with a person swimming freestyle. You appear to become unconscious in a face up position. Bystander – You are a lap swimmer in the outside lane. You are unaware of the incident and are not willing to assist the rescuer if asked, as you want to complete your exercise.
Rescuer brief	You have arrived at your local pool to do some laps to practice for your school swimming carnival. It is not very busy and the lifeguard is not visible.

INITIATIVE SCENARIO 2

Scenario	Lake: The day is clear and there is no wind. There is an elderly person on the shore and an overturned canoe with a person clinging to it and another person face down in the water approximately 10 metres from shore.
Pool location	Ideally set in a pool with a drop off deep end. The entry point is towards the shallow end 2 metres back from the drop off point. Use kickboards to mark this entry zone. One casualty is positioned approximately 8 metres from the drop off point in the deep end holding onto the lane rope (the lane rope simulates the overturned canoe). The other casualty is face down in the water close by.
Equipment	Lifejacket floating in the water. Rope 5 metres long tied on nearest bench (this is to simulate a tie rope on a car). Tree branch on edge. Empty wine cask on ground. Kickboards to mark off entry point.
Casualty brief	Casualty 1 – You are a non-swimmer clinging to an overturned canoe (lane rope). You are not willing to use a rescue aid and attempt to grasp the rescuer if they get too close. Casualty 2 – You are unconscious and face down in water. You regain consciousness when being towed back to shore. Bystander – You are physically not very strong, and have no swimming or lifesaving ability. You are anxious but will follow specific instructions.
Rescuer brief	It is a clear day with no wind. You are going for a run around the local lake. As you get to the car park you hear someone calling for help. The only entry and exit point is between the kickboards, which cannot be used for the rescue.

INITIATIVE SCENARIO 3

Scenario	Hotel Pool: There is no lifeguard on duty and no other adult guests nearby. Two children are playing on the side of the pool with pool noodles when they both accidentally fall into the pool. Neither can swim in the deep water and both start to struggle immediately.
Pool location	Use an area along the edge of the pool in deep water.
Equipment	A life buoy ring. Towels on a hotel lounge. Two pool noodles that the children were playing with are in the water.
Casualty brief	Casualty 1 and Casualty 2 are both non swimmers playing with the pool noodles, jumping around and pushing each other with the noodles when both lose balance and fall in. Casualty 1 - You go straight under the water. Casualty 2 - You are struggling on the water's surface calling out you can't swim.
Rescuer brief	You are at your hotel pool reading a book after having done some laps. You notice two children playing unsupervised on the pool edge.

INITIATIVE SCENARIO 4

Scenario	Home Pool: A group of teenagers are having a party in the neighbour's backyard. There is a lot of laughing and shouting. Two of the group pick up another person to throw them into the water, but they all end up in the water.
Pool location	The water should be deep enough to fall in; boundaries should be set in one corner of the pool using the backstroke flags and the third diving block. The casualties are no further than 2 metres from the edge.
Equipment	Esky at pool end. Towel on block. Hose by side of pool. Scoop net on edge.
Casualty brief	Casualty 1 - You are an injured person. Struggle as you go in and surface head up and screaming in pain. Your head hit the bottom and you think you are bleeding. Casualty 2 - You are a weak swimmer. After entering the water start coughing, choking, panicking and thrashing about. You are disorientated and grab rescuer if they get too close. Bystander 1 - You fall in with the others and on surfacing swim back to edge and get straight out. You are more concerned with blaming your mate for the idea than helping. Bystander 2 - You are on land slightly intoxicated, with no first aid knowledge but will help on clear instructions.
Rescuer brief	You are hanging out the washing in your backyard when you hear a lot of shouting and noise coming from the neighbour's backyard pool. You look over the fence to see what has happened.

INITIATIVE SCENARIO 5

Scenario	River: Two canoeists are paddling in the river. They are not wearing their lifejackets but have them in the canoe. Not watching where they are paddling, they crash into a rock in the middle of the river and overturn. They both grasp onto a nearby branch lodged in the middle of the river. There is a strong current.
Pool location	Set up this initiative by using two lanes of the pool and a lane rope as the tree in the river. The casualties are holding the further lane rope about 5 metres from the shallow end. A bystander is about 15 metres from the pool end and the rescuer approaches the scene from the shallow end.
Equipment	Rope lying on the ground nearby. Tree branch about 3 metres from shallow end. Two lifejackets which have floated to edge.
Casualty brief	Casualty 1 - You are an injured person. You have cut your arm on the tree branch which is bleeding badly. It is painful and you are extremely reluctant to let go of the branch because of the current. Casualty 2 - The current is too strong and you are unable to keep holding the branch. As you are a poor swimmer, you quickly become unconscious soon after letting go. Bystander - You have some first aid knowledge but no swimming ability.
Rescuer brief	You are walking down by the river when you hear cries for help. You look up to see an overturned canoe being swept downstream by the fast current and realise there are two people holding onto a tree branch about 5 metres off the river's edge.

INITIATIVE SCENARIO 6

Scenario	Waterhole: A small campsite is located metres away from the edge of a clear and still waterhole.
Pool location	Mark out the boundaries using two kickboards so that there is only one entry point about 6 metres wide into the swimming pool. If there is a beach entry at the swimming pool, use this as the point of entry.
Equipment	Esky lid. Empty wine bladder. Piece of rope. Inflated lilo. Various tree branches.
Casualty brief	Casualty 1 - You are a weak swimmer. Your friend is 10 metres from shore lying face down in the water. Call out to them and then enter the water to attempt a rescue. At about 5 metres out you realise it is too deep and start to panic. Call out for help. Don't listen to the rescuer unless they give firm and clear instructions. Keep shouting about your friend in trouble. Casualty 2 - You are an unconscious person floating face down approximately 10 metres from the edge of the waterhole.
Rescuer brief	You are camping at the edge of a waterhole with your family when you return to the campsite ahead of the others after a walk. You hear a person call out to their friend who is about 10 metres from shore floating face down. By the time you get to the water's edge, the person is 5 metres away from the shore struggling to keep afloat.

INITIATIVE SCENARIO 7

Scenario	Dam on a Farm: It is a hot summer day and a group of friends are swimming in a dam on a farm. There is a tree overhanging the water and one friend decides to jump from the tree into the murky water.
Pool location	Use the shallow end of the pool with entry only on one side. Mark this with kickboards that cannot be used in the rescue. A beach entry could also be used.
Equipment	Two pool noodles (these are being used in the water by some of the friends).
Casualty brief	Casualty 1 - You are simulating an unconscious person face down in the water with a possible spinal injury. Bystander 1 - You have no lifesaving experience but are calm. Bystander 2 and 3 - You both have no lifesaving experience and are upset and panicking.
Rescuer brief	You are with a group of friends that are swimming in a dam on a farm. There is a tree overhanging the water and one friend has jumped from the tree into the water. The water is not deep and quite murky.

INITIATIVE SCENARIO 8

Scenario	Waterfall: A group of friends are at a local waterfall with a beautiful swimming hole. A swimmer is 15 meters from the edge, holding on to their leg and calling out. One person wades out to assist and becomes in trouble as there is a sudden drop off in the water.
Pool location	Deep water with only one entry point marked by kickboards that cannot be used in the rescue.
Equipment	Inflated lilo. Various tree branches. Rope. Lifejackets (belonging to a nearby family).
Casualty brief	Casualty 1 - You are an injured person who has a cramp. You are holding your leg and calling out for assistance. You do not like the feeling of not being able to swim. Casualty 2 - You are a weak swimmer who has waded out to assist but gets into trouble as there is a sudden drop off in the water. You call out that you are in trouble and cannot swim well.
Rescuer brief	You and some friends are at a local waterfall with a beautiful swimming hole. You are in the water with friends when you hear people calling out for help.

INITIATIVE SCENARIO 9

Scenario	Beach: A group of friends are at the beach relaxing on the sand. A mother is watching her child who is suddenly dumped by a large wave and quickly becomes disorientated. The mother goes to help their child but is a non-swimmer and starts to panic and becomes highly emotional.
Pool location	Use shallow water that gradually gets deeper. Beach entry may be used if available.
Equipment	Beach umbrella. Towel. Boogie board.
Casualty brief	Casualty 1 - You are playing in chest deep water when you get into trouble. A large wave has dumped you and you become disorientated. You are dragged into the deeper water. Casualty 2 - Your child has been dumped by a wave and is struggling to stay afloat. You enter the water in a panic but cannot swim. Call out that you cannot swim but need to rescue your child. Fall over in waist deep water and start to panic. You are unable to put your feet on the bottom to stand up.
Rescuer brief	You are at the beach with friends relaxing on the sand. You notice a mother nearby and her child in the water.


INITIATIVE SCENARIO 10

Scenario	Lagoon: It is a warm busy day at the local lagoon. The lagoon is not very deep but it very muddy with a lot of weeds. Two children who are non-swimmers get out of their depth. They panic and try to hold onto each other. One becomes unconscious while the other is bobbing up and down.
Pool location	Use the shallow end of the pool.
Equipment	Kickboards. One lifejacket. Pool noodles.
Casualty brief	Both casualties are acting as children: Casualty 1 - You and a friend swim out of your depth and are non-swimmers. Your friend tries to grasp you and you become unconscious. Casualty 2 - You and your friend swim out of your depth and are both non-swimmers. You try to grasp your friend for help. You are bobbing up and down. Bystander 1 - You have no first aid or lifesaving skills. Bystander 2 - You have no first aid or lifesaving skills.
Rescuer brief	You are at the local lagoon. The lagoon is not very deep but is very muddy with a lot of weeds. There are a lot of families around enjoying the water. There are no lifeguards nearby and you notice two young children in trouble. Their parents do not appear to be nearby.

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