



The following guidance has been put together for the delivery of Foiling at RYA Recognised Training Centres (RTCs), in addition to, and in accordance with, the current RYA Guidance Notes.

The following information outlines the considerations and requirements for the delivery of RYA Foiling courses available across the differing schemes, including instructor qualification student: instructor ratios, equipment guidance, as well as other safety and operational support.

Writing your operating procedures

The guide will assist in compiling operating procedures but should not be seen as the 'only' approach, more an aid, and in no way exhaustive to the safe practice and delivery of foiling sessions at an RYA Training centre.

It is important that your documentation records what happens in practice and the information below only assists you in doing this. While it is important to record centre procedures, the emphasis is on establishing and documenting a practical and workable framework under which instructors and students can operate, keeping them as safe as possible. It is not about creating an unworkable and useless mountain of paperwork that nobody can understand.

Centres should risk assess the delivery of foiling and adopt procedures which are suitable to their own environment, the experience of their instructors, students' and the foiling disciplines and equipment to be used.

For further details on writing training centre operating procedures as part of your safety management system, please reference the [Guidance document](#) on the RYA Training Support Site.

The following headings are aimed at providing key guidance into the delivery of foiling, in addition to possible structure.

1. Introduction:

The different foiling courses fall within the RYA Sailing, Windsurfing and Wingsurfing Schemes, and can be delivered to both youth and adults.

It is a requirement for centres wishing to run the foiling courses, to be recognised by the RYA in the relevant scheme, such as National Sailing, Windsurfing and/or Wingsurfing.

Your operating procedures should provide an overview of the aims and objectives of the foiling courses and tuition being delivered, who will be receiving the tuition, the courses the centre is recognised for, and when/where it is operated.

The document should also include a brief overview of the staffing structure and responsibilities noting key 'foiling' instructors, and their scope of authority and responsibilities.

2. Certification available

RYA training will determine which Foiling courses are offered depending on equipment and craft available, qualifications and experience of instructors, facilities and operating area.

The centre's operating procedures should clearly outline the courses offered, general information, common practice, eg: **'All courses are run by appropriately qualified instructors'**, and any centre specific information rather than required practice.

Below is an outline of the foiling courses available for Sailing, Windsurfing and Wingsurfing:
[RYA Foiling Courses across the current three disciplines:](#)

First Flights (Taster session)
Sustained Flights
Performance Flights

3. Minimum Course duration

A minimum course duration is specified for all RYA Courses, across all Training Schemes and is available on the [RYA Training Support site](#). Courses should be delivered over the specified number of hours and spread over a series of sessions or full days. With 1:1 tuition a shorter timeframe may be considered.

Foiling can be tiring, and consideration should be placed into how sessions are conducted, with on water time split into manageable sessions to aid maximum learning and progression.

4. Award criteria

Continual assessment during the course, with the potential for direct assessment if available and appropriate. The different foiling certificates are available to recognised training centres, including First Flights Taster.

5. Course supervision

As referenced in the [Recognition Guidance Notes](#) and required for the delivery of the RYA Training Schemes, all training activities should be supervised by an appropriately qualified RYA Senior Instructor (SI).

RYA Dinghy Senior Instructor* - RYA Sailing Scheme

RYA Windsurfing Senior Instructor* - RYA Windsurfing Scheme

RYA Windsurfing Senior Instructor who holds a dinghy Instructor certificate*

RYA Dinghy Senior Instructor who holds a Windsurfing Instructor certificate*

For the duration of the RYA Windsurfing pilot, a centre is required to have an RYA Senior Instructor (Dinghy or Windsurfing), plus a qualified RYA Windsurfing or Wingfoiling Instructor.

6. Minimum instructor qualification and student: instructor ratio

The following table details the minimum instructor qualifications, and ratios required for each course, working with supervision as shown above and subject to recognition being held for the course and type of equipment and craft.

The table below provides instructor ratio and equipment information for RYA Schemes which include Foiling courses:

COURSE	QUALIFICATION	INSTRUCTOR/STUDENT RATIO
RYA First Flights	RYA Foiling Instructor, with Sustained Flights personal competency or above (<i>scheme specific</i>)	Sailing - 1:4 (Risk Assess Winged/adapted boats separately with max ratios put in place)
		Windfoiling 1:4 - (Initial Session with 2 foils to 4 students)
		Wingfoiling 1:4- (Initial Session with 2 foils to 4 students)
RYA Sustained Flights	RYA Foiling Instructor, with Performance Flights personal competency or above* ² (<i>scheme specific</i>)	Sailing - 1:4 (Risk Assess Winged/adapted boats separately with max ratios put in place)
		Windfoiling 1:4
		Wingfoiling 1:4
RYA Performance Flights	RYA Foiling Instructor, with Performance Flights personal competency or above (<i>scheme specific</i>)	Sailing - 1:4 (Risk Assess Winged/adapted boats separately with max ratios put in place)
		Windfoiling 1:6
		Wingfoiling 1:4

Suitably experienced RYA Foiling Instructors can deliver the Sustained and Performance Courses, under the approval of the centre's Principal or Chief Instructor.

7. Safety boat guidance

All safety boat drivers should be briefed on the unique challenges foiling craft bring to an operating area especially when with other water users present. Safety boat drivers should be provided with specific training on recovery of foiling craft and be happy with both alongside rescues, recoveries where equipment is separated and the safe stowage of foiling equipment inside the safety boat (Wingfoiling).

Careful consideration should be placed in the assessment of suitable safety boat: student ratios according to the chosen craft, powerboat design, characteristics and functionality, as well as being in accordance with RYA Safety boat requirements.

A record of this should be kept within your staff training document.

8. Course materials

Please refer to the relevant scheme publications, especially scheme logbooks: G4 Sailing Scheme; G11 Youth Sailing Scheme; W1 Youth Windsurfing Scheme; G47 Windsurfing Scheme, G111 Foiling Publication and [RYA Wing Foiling Instructor Guide](#)

All student's progression should be monitored alongside the relevant syllabus and recorded by their instructor at the end of their time with them, with a certificated issued on successful completion.

9. Training Vessels (Boats, boards and foils)

All foiling equipment must comply with the guidelines set out in within this document, and in accordance with the relevant scheme section of the [RYA Guidance Notes](#).

Risk Assessments should be undertaken, and operating procedures updated with the appropriate staff training delivered. Centres may wish to combine Foiling with its relevant activity, or have a dedicated section making reference to specific '*Foiling equipment*' the centre has, level required to sail the various equipment, specific rigging requirements and instructor qualifications required to teach.

Equipment should be appropriate and enable the entire syllabus to be delivered, with any specific rigging and tuning guides available. Sufficient equipment should be available in order to teach all courses for which it is recognised, in accordance with the student: instructor ratios as listed above. Please see the relevant Training Checklist on the RYA Training Support Site.

Centres should pay close attention and ensure that equipment is correctly set up in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance, considering correct foil, mast and equipment combinations. In the case of Wingfoiling, all equipment must be fitted with Safety leashes.

Poor maintenance will have an effect on the performance of the foils, so it is important foiling equipment is added to maintenance logs, equipment checks and procedures, as well as staff training covering specific safety mechanisms and rigging procedures and specifying the level of students able to use foiling equipment.

Centres must consider any significant risk of entrapment, for example in dinghies, updating and training instructors, as well as safetyboat training to deal with it as necessary. For Sailfoiling, centres must consider using masthead flotation for training to reduce/eliminate inversions in deep water. Students must be aware of the risks associated with inversions.

It is important that instructor session planning and student briefings include elements such as those identified above, as well as consideration for other water users, silence of foiling craft, foils and safety consideration to prevent injury.

10. Operational areas

Careful consideration should be paid to suitable operating area(s) designated to foiling delivery.

For more information, reference the Recognition Guidance Notes on operating area limits. Using diagrams and charts, define the sailing area with limits and potential hazards clearly marked, as descriptions alone can be hard to follow. Remember to include any operating restrictions or other water users who use specific areas which instructors need to be aware of.

The following points have been put together to assist in the consideration of suitable operating areas for delivering the foiling courses and taster session:

Size of area:

- Large sailing areas are required to operate foiling safely, due to the high speed of foiling crafts (boards and boats).
- Sailing areas should be clearly defined and enable room across wind, upwind and downwind.
- Beginners require space across the wind as well as downwind.
- As skills develop, downwind space, similar to that required for asymmetric dinghies and planing windsurfers will be required.

Speed and distance covered:

- Foiling equipment can travel at high speeds, often near silently, therefore careful consideration must be paid to suitable and sufficient space being made available for students, away from other water users.

Briefings:

An effective brief should be provided by the instructors with clear instructions outlining:

- downwind limit
- safety boat
- safe sailing area
- underwater hazards
- other water users
- safety considerations of the equipment

Water depth:

- Consideration should be paid to the depth of water due to the foil lengths.
- Sailing areas should have sufficient depth, with any risks from shallow water assessed and included in instructor briefings.
- Flat water is preferred and should be a priority wherever possible. Some conditions may prevent the delivery of foiling session due student's ability or limits of the equipment's performance. Procedures should include upper (and lower) wind, water state and consideration for student's ability limits.

11. Safety Considerations

Safety at an RYA Training Centre is paramount, and foiling is a new discipline to most training environments. Centres and staff must do all they can to avoid unnecessary risk.

There are a few specific safety considerations when delivering foiling tuition, due to the different features, systems, and ways to set up and rig foiling equipment.

Care and attention should also be paid to the manufacturer's rigging and tuning guides. This will not only ensure safe use of equipment, but also promote best foiling experience through correct set-up.

It is important that the instructors responsible for supervising or running sessions have knowledge on the specific equipment being used, characteristics when stopping and what safety precautions may be necessary.

Personal equipment

The use of helmets should be considered for sail and wind foiling sessions, and compulsory for Wingfoiling. Foil's can be sharp and impacts with equipment can occur. As such, effective assessment into the use of helmets, wetsuits and footwear should be carried out and suitable guidance provided.

Instructor briefings should include clear instructions on techniques, avoidance of crashes and what to do in the event of a sudden stop.

Impact vest (also known as 'Impact Buoyancy Aids') or Buoyancy Aids must be worn at all times and should provide at least 50 Newtons buoyancy and carry the relevant CE Mark. In the case of wind/wingfoiling it may be appropriate for a harness to be worn in placement of a Buoyancy Aid/Impact vest.

Sudden stops:

Unlike traditional planning boards, or modern boats, where students experience capsizes or catapults, students sailing foiling equipment may experiencing crashes or sudden stopping when learning to foil.

For windsurfing, the use of boots should be risk assessed and considered and holding onto the boom during Windfoiling should be briefed to students.

Depending on the design, foiling boats can crash in a few different ways and this should be incorporated into staff training and centre procedures.

By checking equipment is rigged effectively and correctly set up according to the manufactures' guidance, crashes can be minimised. For example, excessive lift on the main foil can lead to the boat leaping out of the water and crashing.

12. Session delivery

As with all instruction, planning, dynamic risk assessing of sailing areas and weather conditions continue to play an important role when deciding how long your students will be able to remain afloat and what might be achievable.

It is important to be aware that students who are new to foiling and developing their technique can tire quickly. Session planning should factor in aspects such as the chosen sailing area; session timings; environments for the sailors to rest, or perhaps the delivery of shorter sessions.

Other aspects will also be key contributing factors such as the student's ability and equipment being used. Different types of foiling boats and boards can create very different experiences for novice foilers.

Staff training should include:

- knowledge on the specific features of the boat/board, foil and wings
- understanding the correct set-up of boat/board, foils and wings
- safety features
- operational considerations

As with all watersports, weather conditions have a huge effect on foiling session delivery: Too little wind, and foiling equipment may not lift out of the water, too much wind and they have the potential to be overpowered, which may lead to sudden stops or potentially harming the student or damaging the equipment.

When creating the operational procedures, the operating areas chosen to deliver foiling should be a high consideration. See '**10. Operational Procedures**'.

Maximum wind strengths, specific to the type of foiling equipment at the centre, considering the user and their abilities. The chosen equipment should be assessed based on its characteristics, with guidance provided for different students' capabilities, top wind strengths and water states.

13. Launching and recovery:

The launching and recovering of foiling equipment, like all centre equipment, requires specific training to ensure staff and students understanding how to handle the equipment safely, preventing damage to the equipment or themselves.

Centres should actively integrate procedures into their staff training, with specific procedures in accordance with their operating areas. Training is beneficial for instructional staff delivering foiling as well as increasing the general knowledge of all staff. Elements to be considered are:

- How the foils and their component parts are attached, rigged and fitted, including the affect this has on how it can be launched and recovered
- Use of suitable areas with sufficient space to ensure the foils can be rigged/ de- rigged and the boat launched/ recovered in a safe environment which minimises risk of harm or damage.
- Any additional procedures a centre may choose to put in place due to their environment or conditions, especially when teaching foiling beginner or taster sessions.
- How to safety and correctly leave and store foils ashore

Summary

- Remember, your operating procedures need to be easy to read and understand by your staff – lay them out in a logical order.
- Train your staff in the operation of the centre with a 'sign sheet' which confirms they have read and understood the centres SOPs, as well as after reviews and additional training have taken place.
- Integrate them into your induction and ongoing staff training.
- Periodic reviews ensure SOPs are kept up to date and relevant, incorporating any lessons learnt from incidents and accidents.
- Document and date changes, providing evidence of a continual review process.
- The SOPs are a fundamental part of the Safety Management Systems within a Training Centre, and when well written they will act as a guide to best practice alongside staff training, ensuring staff are up to speed with the key elements of the operation.