

Swim England Artistic Swimming

FINA rules transition plan outline

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01 Introduction

At the October 2022 FINA Technical Congress, the new rules for Artistic Swimming were approved. Internationally competitions will run against the new rules from 2023.

After many years spent developing a mathematical approach to improve scoring, the introduction of the new system greatly impacts the role of coaches and officials. This plan outlines the key milestones and approach that the Swim England will take, working with its members to transition to the new rules, and ensuring that no club or volunteer is left behind.

FINA has outlined that these new rules will:

- Simplify the process, define roles, and divide tasks.
- Calculate the difficulty using mathematical values and formulas.
- Obtain objective and detailed measurements using technology.
- Introduce well-balanced routines: set the number of hybrids and acrobatics for each routine according to discipline and age group.
- Empower athletes and coaches to make strategic decisions about program composition.
- Provide athletes and coaches with more specific feedback about all aspects of their performances.

FINA 2022

The challenge of judging difficulty in an increasingly athletic and dynamic sport has long been known, and Swim England recognises the benefits that the new rules bring to athletes. Timely adoption will also contribute to ensuring that our talent and development programmes stay on track, continuing to improve our international standing.

Finally, this phased plan is sensitive to the additional pressure these changes will bring whilst clubs and regions continue to be challenged in recovering from the impact of covid-19 restrictions. The delivery plan outlined aims to reassure and support their needs throughout.

02 Area objectives



01 – Coach Education

a) Develop and deliver interactive coaching CPDs, on the new FINA hybrids and acrobatics difficulty scoring system. This will enable coaches to complete parts of the new Coach Cards in the 2023 competitions, to then fully incorporate in 2024.

b) Embed the Coach Cards into the Coach Education pathway.



02 – Competition

a) Update the Swim England competition conditions to include the current judging system, with shadow judging panels piloting the new system in national events during 2023.

b) Deliver events with the full new FINA rules and regulations in 2024.



03 – Judges

a) Five Judges to have attended FINA Judge Certification School on the new system to enable implementation across our national and regional competition events.

b) Delivery of judging workshops to ensure all judges have the opportunity to upskill.

c) Develop and deliver Technical Controller training.



04 – Scoring

a) Work with the chief recorders to develop and implement the new competition setup for scoring.

b) Investment in necessary hardware and software to deliver the new scoring system at events effectively.



05 – Grades

Incorporate the new FINA elements into the grading system, to rollout in January 2023.

03 Critical success factors



100% of clubs competing at national level have a coach that is upskilled

Out of the 60 Artistic Swimming clubs in England, 23 entered routines in NAGS or Champs in 2022. One Coach (Level 2) from each of these 23 clubs will need to have attended one of the Coaches CPD in 2022/23 in order for the Coaching Cards to roll out successfully in 2024. This is a minimum and the regional courses aim to achieve a far greater number closer to 73 coaches (30% of the 245 registered).



All Technical Officials active at national level are upskilled

All Level 2 and 3 Judges must have attended the upskill in order to continue judging nationally in 2024. To ensure sufficient workforce for events, 75% (21/28 Level 3 Judges and 41/55 Level 2 Judges) need to complete the training, in addition to 20 of the 117 Level 1 Judges upskilling to Level 2 on the updated Judging course.

75% of the National Scorers (26/35) will also need to be updated in 2023 to run events with the new system in 2024.



Introduction of the Technical Controller role

The Technical Controller is a new role within Artistic Swimming competitions, Swim England must identify and train at least six officials in this position to run events using the new FINA rules in 2024.



Coaching Cards are operational

Swim England will need to have an Artistic Swimming Coaching Card for coaches to submit for competitions, and be integrated into the entry systems, competition packs and scoring systems.

Every four years Judges, Officials and Coaches are updated in the new FINA routine elements and Age Group figures, this is 'business as usual'. These success factors relate to developing and delivering the completely new elements of the FINA rules with our workforce, and are therefore critical to implementation in England.

04 Timeline

October 2022

Members of the Artistic Swimming Leadership Group attended the FINA clinic for the 2023 updates and resources.

December 2022

The Swim England Artistic Swimming Conference introduces the FINA rules and upskills Judges, Coaches and Officials. Full delivery plan to implement the changes in place for the ASLG.

January 2023

New FINA elements and figures incorporated into the national grading and competitive system.

Further Judging and coaching upskill CPDs rolled out. Development of Technical Controller training begins. February 2023-5 England Judges will have attended the updated FINA Judge School.

March 2023

Shadow judging and scoring system trialled at National Age Groups (and British Champs in April) with new Coach Cards submitted.

May-July 2023

Practice judging event for a GB pre-competition display. GB to attend its first international competition using the full new FINA rules. Swim England reviews roll-out in England.

September 2023

Swim England registered Clubs, Officials and Coaches who haven't accessed update training targeted to ensure upskill is nationwide. Technical controller training course runs.

January 2024

All parts of the new FINA rules rolled out across competitions.

05 Project Management

The project has a Swim England Sports Development Steering Group which includes Karen Thorpe, Claire Coleman and Katya Boyd to oversee its delivery.

The Artistic Swimming Leadership Group will submit a quarterly progress report to the SOC.

The delivery of the plan is crucial to ensuring future international success.

Risks

If the implementation plan is not followed, athletes, coaches and technical officials would not be practicing Artistic Swimming in England as it is done internationally. The knock-on effect of this would be seen as athletes move up the pathway into talent squads, lacking competitive experience in the new FINA competition system. England and Great Britain would inevitably start to fall behind in rankings.

Our Judges and Officials would be practicing an outdated format, and the pathway for Swim England Judges to progress to FINA G Judges and FINA A Judges would be severely impacted. This also has a knock-on effect on the level of swimmers competing, as judging experience internationally informs judging and coaching practice in England. This also risks a drop-off in participation at the highest level if swimmers feel they cannot succeed internationally whilst competing in an outdated system nationally.

