

Artistic Swimming Leadership Group

8th April 2024

Attendees:

Maria Ramos (MR)	Chair
Louise Ross (LR)	Coaching Lead
Hannah Secher (HS)	Workforce Lead
Ian Atkinson (IA)	Competition Lead
Sarah Clarke (SC)	Athlete Reward and Recognition Lead
Ekaterina Boyd (EB)	Swim England Head of Events
Gareth Picken (GP)	Swim England Sport Development Administrator

Additional attendees:

Richard Blackshaw (RB)	Swim England Head of Performance
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Apologies:

Karen Thorpe (KT)	Artistic Swimming Manager
Keith Munday (KM)	Sport Operations Committee Leadership Group Liaison
Claire Coleman (CC)	Swim England Head of Development

Standing Items	
1.	Chairs welcome and Apologies
	MR welcomed everyone to the meeting. RB introduced himself and explained his role within Swim England (SE). The group introduced themselves. KT and CC sent their apologies ahead of the meeting.
2.	Action Log
	MR listed the actions in the action log. Action -GP to send the action log to MR.
3.	Updates from each of the Leads:
3.1	Grades
	SC began by mentioning that the routine grades review group is at a point of appointing members. The group will launch in September with the new grades to be implemented from January 2025. There was a wider discussion around how to rollout the grade changes. SC presented a draft guidance document for clubs with neurodivergent athletes during grade days. The document outlines the process required for clubs to follow ahead of competitions. Additionally, SC has drafted a reminder document for judges outlining the role expectations and requirements during competitions.

3.2	Coaching Programme
	<p>LR updated the group that regions are contacting her asking that courses are run within their regions, however there are too few people interested to make in profitable in each regions. LR highlighted that most of the courses are run through zoom with only one weekend require for in person contact.</p> <p>MR suggested that the regions should help fund those interested in attending courses with any transport/ accommodation cost rather that fund a course in their region.</p> <p>RB raised that the regions meet every other Monday morning during which current courses could be discussed among the regional staff.</p> <p>LR further mentioned that at a recent Teaching Stokes workshop she was approach by a number of teachers who were keen to deliver Artistic Swimming, however the constraint is with the number and distribution of CPD delivers. MR suggested that this is raised with Becky Walker as it would develop the discipline.</p> <p>Action – LR to produce an audit of the presenter list. Action – ASLG to review the syllabus and whether a refresher course is required for presenters. Action – LR to speak with Becky Walker regarding how to support the growth of the discipline.</p>
3.3	Officials
	<p>HS mentioned that the all the regions are running level 1 and 2 courses. There were more than enough officials for National Championships.</p> <p>Alison Pratt has been selected to attend the Olympic Games as Technical Controller.</p> <p>IA asked whether some Technical Controllers (TC) should attend National Championships to gain experience with a Lead TC. The group agreed that this was a good idea for next year once the new TC’s have gained more hand-on experience before shadowing.</p>
3.4	Development
	This item was postponed to the next meeting.
3.5	Club Health Tracker
	<p>This item was postponed to the next meeting.</p> <p>Action - GP to check numbers of AS clubs engaging with the CHT.</p>
3.6	Regional Managers meeting update
	<p>MR gave a verbal summary from the RM meeting. KT provided an update on National Squads and Regional opportunities.</p> <p>General feedback from all regions was positive, however a similar theme is appearing with Regions struggling to recruit volunteers to support the discipline. Cost to train was cited as a</p>

	<p>reason. Differences are appearing in the way the Regions are structured which is impacting on AS implementation of plans.</p> <p>Helen Weeks, SE Governance and Welfare Manager, joined the meeting to provide detail on the Team Manager, Coach and Chaperone Policy.</p> <p>Additionally an update was provided on the scoring system template and the roles for Scorers and Chief Recorders.</p> <p>Overall the feedback was generally positive.</p> <p>HS left the meeting at 19:40.</p>
4.	AS Conference feedback
4.1	Date and location
	Due to KT being abroad recently, MR has not yet met to discuss the details of the conference.
4.2	Planning process
	Action - MR and KT to meet to outline details of the conference
5.	Competitions
5.1	NAGs feedback
	<p>EB is waiting on the Insight team for the survey responses from athletes and volunteers. The verbal feedback was generally positive. There were a couple of challenges which arose during the competition but did not affect the competition as a whole.</p> <p>Financially, the Events team found it was more profitable for tickets to be sold per session rather than for each day. This is a change which will be implemented for future competitions.</p> <p>The selection of officials for National Events was discussed, as letters to officials advising they were not needed was incorrect.</p> <p>The group reinforced the criteria was based on regional representation, balance of experience and levels of activity at other competitions.</p> <p>Action: EB to follow up with the volunteer team to review the letters and update where necessary.</p>
5.2	Championship update
	<p>Officials have been notified as to whether they have been selected for National Championships. Competition packs to be sent out by the end of the week. Additionally, Laura has rejoined the National Events Team from maternity leave although she will not be attending the National Championships.</p> <p>MR advised that entries are similar to last year, still slightly down from pre-COVID competitions, but not reducing. 10 Acrobatic teams have been entered for the first time.</p>

5.3	Job description for chief recorders
	Awaiting feedback from Working Group who have been busy with the National Events. Postponed to the next meeting.
5.4	Guidance pack for inclusion of Neurodivergent swimmers
	SC mentioned that the pack was included within the National Age Group Championships and to be included at the National Championships.
6.	AOB
6.1	Artistic Swimming Calendar
	Postponed to the next meeting.
6.2	Administrative work
	Postponed to the next meeting.
6.3	Additional items
	<p>RB presented to the group the SE Talent Investment strategy which was proposed to Sport England. RB to circulate the presentation following the meeting. The presentation was received positively by the group.</p> <p>IA raised that mixed clubs duets at National Championships should be an item for a future agenda. MR agreed with the principle and suggested that this should be discussed at future meeting.</p>
7.	Close of meeting
	MR closed the meeting at 20:32 Next meeting – 3 rd June