

Meeting of the Artistic Swimming Leadership Group

Wednesday 20th May 2026 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Venue: In person/TEAMS

Members	Initials	Mtg 1 27.01.26	Mtg 2 17.03.26	Mtg 3 20.05.26	Mtg 4 21.07.26	Mtg 5 29.0.26	Mtg 6 24.11.26
Maria Ramos, Chair	MR			✓			
Hannah Sercher, Workforce Lead	HS			✓			
Louise Ross, Coaching Lead	LR			✓			
Ian Atkinson, Competition Lead	IA			✓			
Sarah Clarke, Athlete Reward & Recognition Lead	SC			P			
Karen Thorpe, Artistic Swimming Manager	KT			✓			
Keith Munday, SOC Representative	KM			✓			

Non-members in attendance on 20.05.2026:

Claire Coleman, Head of Aquatics Clubs	CC	A
Ekaterina Boyd, Head of Events	EK	✓
Catherine Searcy (Minutes post meeting)	CS	X

Key: ✓ = Present, A = Apologies given, P = Partial attendance, X = Non-attendance

STANDING ITEMS: ADMINISTRATION	
1.	Chairs Welcome
	MR welcomed everyone to the meeting.
1.2	Apologies
	Apologies were received from CC, Richard Blackshaw and Richard Lamburn.
1.3	Declarations of interest
	No changes or conflicts of interest were reported by any member present.
1.5	Minutes of the Artistic Swimming Leadership Group meeting
	The previous minutes were reviewed briefly with concerns noted regarding accuracy (likely transcript-generated).
	Action: Maria Ramos to review and finalise previous minutes.
1.6	Actions from previous meeting
	To be reviewed and updated ahead of the next meeting.
SECTION 2: STRATEGIC MATTERS	
2.	Update from Leads
2.1	Grades
	<p>Grades Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video presentation has been completed and submitted - awaiting feedback from CC. • Concerns focused around: Timing vs World Aquatics changes; Communication clarity; Feedback structure (who responds) • Agreed that progress must continue to avoid delays for 2027 season • Two separate elements clarified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grade structure changes ○ World Aquatics figures/TRE updates <p>Decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proceed with consultation and planned rollout • Introduce clear contingency clause - If WA changes are too late (e.g. after 1 Nov), delay implementation of affected parts • Feedback to be submitted by club (max 2 responses recommended) <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KT to respond to Claire's feedback • KT to clarify survey structure (club-based responses) • ASLG to add survey statement re: WA timing uncertainty

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comms/KT to develop robust communication plan (learning from previous feedback issues) <p>Scoring & Timing Systems:</p> <p>IA gave an overview.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current systems (manual/Excel-based) at capacity Significant inefficiencies and volunteer workload Options Under Review: Current system upgrade; Canadian ISS system; KSIS (international system) <p>Decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct full options appraisal and transition planning Timeline for decision: before Dec 2026 Trial implementation: 2027 season <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IA to produce comparison paper (features, cost, governance) IA to liaise with Head of Digital (Josh Hardy) IA to develop rollout plan with shadow testing phase and gradual transition
2.2	Coaching
	No update available.
2.3	Officials
	No update available.
2.4	SOC Update
	Paper taken as read.
2.5	Sport & Community Participation Health Updates
	Paper taken as read.
2.6	National Talent
	<p>KT will provide a paper post-meeting to be circulated to all.</p> <p>It was noted that the majority of the athletes we have on the programme, 48 of them sit with Swim England and two with Aquatics GB.</p>
3.	Minimum Depths
	<p>Minimum Depth Guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health & Safety Advisory Group rejected age-based differentiation New proposal of single depth standard using deeper requirement (safety-first)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Concern is that guidance is being misinterpreted for facility design. This risks new pools being built too shallow (e.g. 1.8m) when the reality is that deeper water required for full sport (e.g. acrobatics) <p>Decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support revised depth table (no age differentiation) BUT clarify that this is training guidance, not facility design specification <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EB/KM to feedback to Health & Safety + Facilities: Add clarification to avoid misuse • EB to send updated table to ASLG • ASLG (KT/MR) to develop additional guidance on “Ideal facility depth vs minimum depth” and risks of shallow-only facilities • IA and KM to engage Facilities Team (Richard Lamburn) on reviewing Swim England facility design guidance and ensuring inclusion of Artistic Swimming needs
4.	<p>Official registered to Regions vs Clubs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current requirement for officials to be affiliated with a club creates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conflicts of interest (e.g. Technical Controllers stepping back) ○ Barriers for international officials or independent volunteers • Regions can (in some cases) register officials directly rather than via clubs, but practice is inconsistent. • Main concern raised by Swim England = liability and insurance responsibility. • Strong support for allowing regional-level affiliation where appropriate. • Recognition this is ultimately manageable under existing insurance frameworks. <p>Decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage regions to allow direct membership of officials (non-club affiliated). <p>Actions: KM to draft letter to Regional Chairs to outline issue and benefits, encourage flexible membership approach.</p>
5.	<p>Officials criteria changes for National Competitions</p> <p>Officials Selection, Competency & Age Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about competency of some judges at national level, limited positions vs large number of qualified judges and need to support progression of newer judges • Age limit discussed but considered legally risky (age discrimination) • Agreed it is not the right mechanism • Lack of formal evaluation framework • Over-reliance on qualification rather than performance

- Need to balance fairness, transparency and development pathway

Decisions:

- No age-based criteria introduced
- Selection to be based on competency, experience, and development needs
- Introduce stronger data-led evaluation approach

Actions:

- EB to circulate current officials selection criteria framework
- HM/MR/IA to develop evaluation process using existing judging data, exploring the use of Chief recorder insights and AI/data analysis approaches (early work by Carrie)
- MR to consider creating evaluation subgroup/panel
- HS to investigate domestic judge evaluation tools (e.g. Slovak system)
- Incorporate selection criteria such as: Activity level within season, Regional involvement, Experience and Development quotas (e.g. % for new judges)

SECTION 3: CLOSE

6.

Any other business

Judging Evaluation – Interim Approach

- Existing data (scores, outliers) already identifies poor performance
- Not yet formalised or consistently used
- **Decision:** Use existing event data + referee/scorer feedback as interim evaluation mechanism

Actions:

- Referees & Chief Recorders - Provide post-event formalised feedback summary
- ASLG to review data annually to inform appointments

Workforce Training – “8–10” Programme

- High demand for course delivery
- Insufficient educators available
- Programme remains active (despite prior confusion)
- **Decision:** Prioritise recruitment of new educators

Actions:

- KT to issue call to community, targeting Level 2 Artistic Swimming coaches
- LR to develop & deliver targeted presenter training workshop, training new educators regionally
- ASLG to aim for minimum 1–2 educators per region

	<p>Governance & External Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin's Law (counter-terrorism) implementation expected ~April 2027 • Will have a significant impact on event planning and paperwork • Will be supported via Sport & Recreation Alliance guidance • Medical (CQC) Regulations: Potential requirement for medical staff regulation. This will increase the risk of increased costs and reduced availability of medical professionals. Currently under consultation. <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EB to continue engagement with national guidance and provide updates • ASLG to prepare for operational impact (cost + compliance) <p>Recognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congratulations were noted for Mary Black who is being inducted into the Hall of Fame • KT has asked Georgie to come next Friday to the regional games to so that the presentation can be done then.
7.	Next meeting date:

Meeting closed.