

ARTISTIC SWIMMING

NATIONAL SENIOR PROGRAMME

ATHLETE SELECTION GUIDELINES

26 September 2025 to 30 August 2028

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Aquatics GB (AGB) and Swim England (SE) are the National Governing Bodies for aquatics in Great Britain and England respectively and are jointly responsible for the delivery of the Great Britain performance pathway programmes for Artistic Swimming. AGB oversees the nomination of the World Class Programme and senior team/squad activity at Olympic Games, World Championship and European Championship level. SE oversees the selection of junior teams and squads.
- 1.2 These guidelines outline the criteria and considerations for selection onto the Artistic Swimming National Senior Programme, which includes the National Senior Team, Solo and Duet Programmes. **There are a maximum number of 20 places for the National Senior Programme.** Once selected, athletes will remain, subject to satisfactory performance results and performance trajectory, and meeting all specified requirements, on the squad until the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games. Athletes are asked to note clauses 4.1 and 4.2 in relation to occasions when athletes may be withdrawn from the programme.
- 1.3 Nomination of athletes to the Artistic Swimming World Class Programme is not covered by these guidelines. Nominations for the World Class Programme are via the Aquatics GB Athlete Investment Guidelines 2025/2026 (available [here](#)). Athletes are asked to note that nominations and selections for any junior programme or squad activity is overseen by SE and respective policies for these.

2. OVERARCHING SELECTION PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 The Artistic Swimming National Senior Programme aims to develop elite, world-class performers as part of the overall mission for 2025-2032 to establish Great Britain as a global leader in Artistic Swimming, driven by excellence, innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability, while inspiring growth and participation at all levels.
- 2.2 To be eligible to be considered for selection, all athletes must be a current member of Swim England, Scottish Swimming or Swim Wales and be in 'good standing' with their member body at the time of selection and for the duration of any programme inclusion. Where applicable, athletes' age for consideration for any programme or squad with an age restriction is based on their age as of 31st December. Athletes must also be eligible to represent Great Britain as per the World Aquatics Competition rules and regulations at the time of selection consideration and for the duration of any squad/programme membership or competition (except for athletes outlined in 2.3).

- 2.3 AGB may at its absolute discretion select an athlete for the programme who is not currently eligible under clause 2.2 where the athlete is expected to become eligible within the next 12 months and has commenced their application process for English or British citizenship where relevant, at the time of selection.
- 2.4 Additional athletes **may** be selected through the programme year who have not met all of the required consideration performance criteria but are showing performances that are on a performance trajectory for future success at GB level. This will be at the discretion of the Selection Panel.
- 2.5 Additional athletes **may** also be selected throughout the season to access bespoke, targeted activities or programmes, or to fill (on a temporary or permanent basis) an available programme space. This will be at the discretion of the Head of Performance for Artistic Swimming in consultation with the AGB Performance Director or his designate.
- 2.6 Athletes selected will be required to comply with any requirements and/or additional conditions required by AGB from time to time, including but not limited to:
- I. Committing to all aspects of the programme and engaging with all mandatory programme activities.
 - II. Informing the Programme Lead immediately of any illnesses or injuries and/or if the athlete is planning to leave the sport or Programme.
 - III. Complying with the AGB Athlete Code of Conduct and other relevant AGB policies.
 - IV. Making any required financial contributions for the delivery of activity as outlined in the specific programme and competition guidelines. Such financial contributions allow AGB to maximise the quality and extent of the programme offer and will be detailed in advance prior to the start of the programme activity.
- 2.7 Athletes are asked to note that a previous selection for a programme or competition by AGB/Swim England is no guarantee of selection for the squad in the future. When considering the selection of an athlete who has been selected previously, AGB will consider their past and current performance level, conduct and behaviour on the previous programme(s) and competition performances whilst on programme.

3. NOMINATION AND NOTIFICATION

- 3.1 A selection panel will be established for proposing and agreeing athlete selections for the National Senior Squad and the respective solo and duet programmes within. The panel will be chaired by an AGB World Class Leadership Team member and be made up of the following people:
- Head of Performance for Artistic Swimming (voting)
 - National Head Coach(es) (voting)
 - National Assistant Coach (voting)
 - International Judges/Officials (non-voting)
 - Sport Science and Medicine Practitioners, as required (non-voting)
 - Note taker – this may be designated to one of the above personnel

- 3.2 Representatives from UK Sport and/or Aquatics GB may be invited to observe the selection meeting. In the event the panel cannot come to an agreement, the Head of Performance for Artistic Swimming will have the casting vote.
- 3.3 All panel members are required to declare any conflicts of interest at the beginning of a selection meeting. Depending on the nature of the conflict, the member may be required to abstain from the selection discussion and decision of the specific athlete where there is a conflict of interest, the Selection Panel Chair will confirm at the beginning of the meeting if this is required.
- 3.4 The Selection Panel will meet on **Saturday 27th September 2025**.
- 3.5 Additional to the general requirements outlined in the overarching principles (2.1, 2.2, 2.6), the following eligibility criteria also apply:
- I. aged 15 years or older as of 31st December 2026.
 - II. part of the recognised artistic swimming pathway in a national programme during or before 2025; **or**
 - III. have achieved a top ten finish in an individual event at a National event (NAGs or NC) during the past two years.
 - IV. Athletes may also be considered if they have achieved a significant result individually during the last competitive season (for example from an overseas competition), identified as high performance at the discretion of the Artistic Swimming Technical Lead.
- 3.6 The process for selection is as follows:
- I. **Athlete expression of interest** - Eligible athletes wishing to be considered for inclusion on the programme are required to **complete an application form by 1700 hours on Monday 15th September 2025** – the application for can be found [HERE](#)
 - II. **Athlete Trial* - Athletes** meeting the selection consideration criteria will be invited for a trial event. This will take place **26th – 27th September 2025**, at the Artistic Swimming High Performance Centre at Hengrove Leisure Centre, Bristol, BS14 0DE. Athletes are advised that participation in the Trial event will require a contribution of £95 payable at the point of invite.
****The trial will consist of a series of tests in all the Artistic Swimming Performance Criteria, areas including speed swimming, flexibility, strength and sports specific technical skills, to provide the Selection Panel with a benchmark against the Performance Criteria as detailed in Appendix A.***
 - III. **Athlete Probation Period** – Up to 20 athletes successfully completing the athlete trial will be invited to join the National Squad for an initial probationary period from 3rd October 2025 – 20th December 2025. During the probation period athlete development will be monitored and subject to passing the probation period, selected athletes will be appointed to the squad until the end of the cycle after the 2028 LA Olympic Games. All athletes must continue to meet the general requirements for squad membership, alignment with the overarching principles outlined in section 2 and performance criteria within Appendix A.

Athletes are asked to note that the first training will start the week after selection, with the first training session on Friday 3rd October and Saturday 4th October.

- IV. **National squad training** – Up to 20 athletes will be confirmed from the probation period for continued membership of the National Squad. Following selection confirmation (December 2025), athletes will be given a series of training dates and a club-based training programme to follow. National training will be mandatory and held at the High Performance Centre (HPC) for Artistic Swimming (Hengrove Leisure Centre in Bristol). **Training will become full time (Monday – Saturday, 0800-1700) for squad members from May 2026 onwards and will include sessions for stamina, fitness, strength and conditioning, flexibility, extension, dance, technical skills and routines.**

Summary of nomination process:

Stage	Dates	Who
I. Athlete expression of interest	By 15 th September (1700)	Any eligible athlete
II. Initial Trial event - Bristol	26 th /27 th September 2025	Invited eligible athlete
III. Probation Period <i>Athletes selected following the initial trial are given individual feedback and targets. Athletes may not be invited for ongoing squad inclusion at this point.</i>	3 rd October 2025 – 20 th December 2025	Up to a maximum total of 20 athletes
IV. Ongoing National Squad training <i>Weekly training at the Artistic Swimming High Performance Centre in Bristol on a Friday and Saturday (with some Sundays) and 1 x full week of training per month until May 2026. Full time training from May 2026 onwards.</i>	January 2026 – to the end of the season (review at this point)	Up to a maximum total of 20 athletes

National Solo and Duet Programme

- 3.7 The Solo and Duet programmes are integrated training and development activities within the National Squad programme. Athletes to be considered for the Solo and Duet Programmes will comprise:

- Current World Class Programme athletes (x2) – these athletes will be given priority access to the solo and duet programmes
- Currently selected athletes for solo and duet programmes will also be given priority for continued inclusion

- After the initial trial event, potential solo and duet athletes will be invited to join a training squad and a further selection will be made during the season depending on the competition strategy. All selection criteria will be based on the Performance Criteria (Appendix A).

3.8 Athletes specifically on the Solo and Duet programme will follow a different training programme to the wider National Senior Squad. They will train centrally more frequently, and a specific training programme will be developed once the athletes have been selected and this will be based on their other commitments. Full commitment to this training programme is required.

Competition opportunities and team selections

- 3.9 Athletes may be offered competition opportunities as part of their national squad inclusion, and as part of the overall individual and team athlete planning process. Each year, a new competition strategy is determined based on many factors such as priorities of the National Programme, venue/country, time of year, budget and the goal of the programme and athlete standards. These may require a financial contribution. **For athletes selected for a competition, a standard contribution for International Competitions will be applicable per night away from home, £30 per night for European and £50 per night for competitions across the rest of the World.**
- 3.10 Selections for Great Britain representative competitions (e.g. World or European Championships) will be via a team selection policy.
- 3.11 As a member of the National Senior Programme and given that Artistic Swimming is a team sport, athletes will need to be flexible around their studies. Where possible, lessons and lectures should be organised to be viewed online and caught up after training. Athletes will need to negotiate in advance with education providers as time away from lectures/lessons will be inevitable. National staff can help with this negotiation.
- 3.12 It is the responsibility of all AGB high performance programmes to facilitate a positive performance culture that drives the performance of the athlete cohort, whilst at the same time upholding the highest athlete welfare standards. At times, this will involve challenging conversations with athletes, high levels of expectation with pressure to perform, and uncomfortable training demands. On occasion, this will require athletes to work outside of their comfort zone.

4. WITHDRAWAL OR SUSPENSION FROM THE SQUAD

- 4.1 The Head of Performance for Artistic Swimming may recommend to the selection panel, at any time that an athlete be suspended or withdrawn from the squad. Recommendations to withdraw athletes from the squad and/or to terminate membership will be made at the absolute discretion of the Head of Performance for Artistic Swimming if the athlete is no longer seen as a strong genuine future World Class Programme prospect. Such recommendations will be made in consultation with the panel.

- 4.2 In addition, circumstances that warrant withdrawal or suspension from the squad include but are not limited to:
- i. failure to make the required commitment to training or meet the required fitness standards.
 - ii. failure to engage fully in National squad/programme activities as outlined by the respective Head Coach/Programme lead/Head of Performance
 - iii. failure to engage fully in designated review meetings and monitoring procedures.
 - iv. failure to fully complete self-monitoring data.
 - v. non-disclosure of medical or injury information to appropriate AGB staff.
 - vi. failure to comply with the Athlete Code of Conduct, Grievance and Discipline policies; or
 - vii. in the sole opinion of the Head of Performance for Artistic Swimming, a failure to optimise their current training environment
 - viii. the athlete becoming ineligible to represent Great Britain
- 4.3 Any athlete being considered for withdrawal from the squad due to performance will undergo a review meeting with the Head of Performance and any other relevant member of the workforce, where the areas of concern will be discussed with the athlete. The athlete will be invited to comment on the concerns at the meeting and may follow up in writing within seven days of the meeting. If it is considered that further improvement is required (by the Head of Performance in conjunction with the respective Programme Coach and the athlete's Home Coach), the athlete will be informed of a review date, where a decision will be made based on the needs of the programme or competition.
- 4.4 Athletes who are unable to train or compete due to illness or injury must inform the Artistic Swimming Programme staff as soon as is possible. Athletes on the programme who suffer illness or injury will retain their place on the programme for the duration of such.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

Appeals

- 5.1 The independent appeals process for both programme selections and World Class programme selection is available (for all sports) at the Aquatics GB [website](#) . In the case of programme selection, this appeal period is extended to five working days. Athletes are asked to note that appeals can only be made on the grounds outlined and are required to be submitted within five working days of programme nominations. For clarity, any appeal must be received by email to legal@aquaticsgb.com
- 5.2 Please direct any queries or requests for further information to Adam Clarke, Performance Strategy and Operations Director on 07825 768858 or via email adam.clarke@aquaticsgb.com

APPENDIX A

ATHLETE ATTRIBUTES AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Artistic swimming is a team sport that requires more than just athletic performance for selection. The selection process and consideration of the panel therefore takes account of various ‘holistic’ elements including technical and routine skills, mind-set, attitude and how athletes work within the team. To form a view on these elements, input may be sought from all national team staff and coaches working with the programme to assist the panel in their decision making.

All Performance Criteria is based on the [World Aquatics Manual](#) for Judging, and performances will be considered against the manual.

Athletes will also be tested on [Team A Elements](#) (page 361-364) and a selection of movements from the [Hybrid Catalogue](#) from a range of the families.

Strength tests will be performed under the guidance of the National Staff and the Strength and Conditioning coach for Artistic Swimming. Although strength tests are important and measure an athlete’s strength and condition, they will also demonstrate a level of expertise, mental strength and work ethic, however, they are not the main focus of trials.

Athlete evaluation during the trial will include, but is not limited to, the following criteria:

Area	Detail
Physiological Requirements:	General physical fitness and strength (out of water)
	Artistic Swimming general fitness and strength (in water)
	Flexibility (in and out water)
Technical ability & specific markers: (in the water)	Synchronisation and count accuracy
	Pattern accuracy
	Thrust action and height
	Element accuracy
	Height
	Line accuracy
	Flexibility
	Extension (full body)
	Accuracy of spin (levels, speed, on spot)
	Execution
	Speed of movement and sharpness
	Energy and artistic impression (facial expression)
	Artistic Mastery – ability to deliver the choreography
	Acrobatic consistency
Compatibility:	Propulsion
	Individual contribution to enhance dynamics
	Has the ability to appreciate others
	Competitive but supportive

Psychological abilities:	Mental toughness – demonstrates resilience and maintains a relentless pursue of learning and optimum performance under pressure and adversity
	Focus and concentration - maintains performance focus in training and competition
	Driven - demonstrates internal drive, hunger, desire and motivation towards excellence
	Confidence in own ability to correct and adapt as required
The Human Factor:	Takes ownership and is independent
	Work ethic based on intensity of training
	Working as part of a team, taking corrections and coachable
	Polite and well mannered