FINA ARTISTIC SWIMMING JUDGES PATHWAY

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to explain the process that all the Technical Officials, within a FINA National Member Federation, may follow in order to become eligible to judge at FINA Events.

A key element in this process are the FINA Schools, a development programme that offers all the officials around the world the opportunity to progress and to be acknowledged as certified officials.

The main goal of this programme is to promote sports growth by offering a continuous learning pathway for active artistic swimming judges, providing and setting the necessary competencies to become a FINA Judge.

A range of FINA Development and Certification Schools are currently offered by the FINA Development Programme, with the objective of establishing a universal and standardised judges training and certification system.

Through this programme all the participants have access to the same information, guidelines and interpretation of the FINA Rules, increasing the number of certified officials and enhancing their knowledge.
1. FINA Officials Certification Pathway

The FINA Officials Certification Pathway allows a Technical Official to progress through different steps to become a recognised International Technical Official.

There are a variety of entry points for officials, depending on their existing knowledge, experience, proven abilities and qualifications. The below flowchart illustrates how the officials may progress along the certification pathway:

- **FINA AS Development Schools Beginner level**
  - Judges with no prior knowledge or experience
  - At least 40h/year of practical judging must be obtained after passing the beginner level test before attending the next school level

- **FINA AS Development Schools Intermediate level**
  - Active judges requiring more in depth training including competition requirements and duties of officials
  - At least 40h/year of practical judging must be obtained after passing the intermediate level test before attending the next school level

- **FINA AS Development Schools Advanced level**
  - Mandatory for certification
  - Designed for judges wishing to become eligible to officiate at FINA Events
  - Open to new judges who have passed an Advanced level School and have registered at least 60h judging with their Continental Representative prior to attending the Certification School

- **FINA AS Certification Schools**
  - Mandatory for certification
  - Open to FINA A and G Judges requiring certification

- **FINA AS Exam for Certified Judges**
  - To be eligible to judge at FINA events, all the certified judges must annually pass an Online Exam through the FINA Learning Platform

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2. General considerations

2.1 Description

The FINA Artistic Swimming Development and Certification Schools are held over a duration of three (3) days concluding with an Exam.

The official working language for the FINA Artistic Swimming Development and Certification Schools for Judges is English.


The courses are given by Instructors, members of the FINA TASC or appointed by the FINA TASC based on the following criteria:

- Continental representation consideration
- Proven experience with teaching and facilitating courses/seminars
- Proven professionalism and neutrality
- Evaluation excellence
- Superior communication skills

Instructors will be proposed to the FINA TASC from the list of current FINA A judges/Evaluators or recently retired FINA A judges/evaluators. These will be reviewed every four years or as required by the TASC.

2.2 Requirements

At least ten (10) Judges must attend in order to have a FINA Artistic Swimming Development or Certification School. Maximum registered delegates is thirty (30) people per school including observers.

- If the maximum number of thirty (30) judges is not reached at the conclusion of the registration, additional observers are welcome to attend up to the total maximum of 30 delegates
- No more than one coach per federation may register as observer
- No observers have the right to write the exam
- All candidates and observers must be registered in the FINA GMS by the required deadline to be eligible

The registration for the schools will be closed once the maximum number of participants has been reached.
2.2 Requirements (cont.)

All the participants attending a FINA Artistic Swimming Development or Certification School must be nominated by their National Federations through the FINA GMS by the registration deadline. All participants shall ensure that they comply with the below requirements:

- Be at least 18 years of age and not over 65 years of age at the start of the FINA Development School programme
- Demonstrate a good level of spoken and written skills in English
- Fully participate in all sessions of the course and complete all required assessments
- Agree to abide by the FINA Code of Ethics
- It is strongly recommended that candidates have independent appropriate travel and health insurance coverage before undertaking any independent officials practice to cover any unusual circumstances
- Only fully submitted registrations will be considered for approval. The nationality of the nominated participants will be verified by the FINA Office
- Please note that only approved participants may attend a FINA Artistic Swimming Development or Certification School

The Coaches participating at the FINA Schools must submit a written report of key learnings and recommendations for the future to the FINA Coaches Commission within thirty (30) days of the conclusion of the school.

The FINA Coaches Committee will then provide a consolidated report to the FINA TASC at the end of the certification year.

2.3 Exam Writing – Code of Conduct

If a participant is absent one day from the school, he/she can’t take the test. If a participant is absent a half day for unusual circumstances, he/she must provide the reason for his/her absence to the instructor. This will be taken into consideration by the instructor in determining whether the participant will be allowed to take the test.

For the written exam, interpreters, use of online resources, electronic watches and cell phones are not permitted. Paper dictionaries are allowed but must be shown to the instructor prior to writing the exam.

Disciplinary actions will be taken against those who act in a dishonest way or for any misconduct, including the removal from the FINA List for a two-year period.
3. FINA Artistic Swimming Development Schools for Judges

3.1 Overview

In order for any person to begin training as an Artistic Swimming Judge, FINA offers to all National Federations the possibility to host a FINA Artistic Swimming Development School at three different levels:

- **AS Development Schools – Beginner level** are designed to meet the needs of those National Federations who have requested judges’ instruction and do not have any Judges training programmes in place. This School caters to those with limited basic knowledge or no experience in judging.

- **AS Development Schools – Intermediate level** are designed for those National Federations that have judge training programmes in place and host national Age Group competitions. Judges participating will be knowledgeable, active and experienced requiring more in-depth training of skills at an intermediate level including competition requirements and duties of officials.

- **AS Development Schools – Advanced level** are designed for National Federations that have their own Judges school programmes and want to promote their national Judges to be qualified as FINA Judges. It is recommended for those Federations running national Artistic Swimming Age Group and Senior competitions. This School caters to those who require more in-depth training of skills at an advanced level and helps to prepare participants to attend, participate and certify at a FINA Artistic Swimming Certification School for Judges.

Please note that the following individuals do not need to attend a FINA Artistic Swimming Development School and may attend a FINA Artistic Swimming Certification School to write their exam:

- National Team Elite Swimmers (retired), National Team coaches and National Judges, as long as the following requirements have been met:
  - Significant judging activity at a national level involving different age groups for a minimum of 3 years
  - Judging at international events hosted by their own Federation
  - Proven judging ability with strong evaluations from a FINA Certified Evaluator for a minimum of 3 years

Federations wishing to nominate a candidate for exemption must forward the name to the FINA Office and submit the required paperwork (judging activity report and copies of evaluations for a minimum of 3 years) according to the timelines.

3.2 Specific course requirements

These courses are open to all the National Federations interested in training Judges that are not on the current FINA List.

All participants attending a FINA Artistic Swimming Development School shall ensure that they comply with the below requirements:
3.2 Specific course requirements (cont.)

- At least forty (40) hours per year of practical judging must be obtained after passing the test at a FINA Artistic Swimming Development School - Beginner or Intermediate level prior to advancing to the next school level (either from Beginner to Intermediate or from Intermediate to Advanced).
- At least sixty (60) hours per year of practical judging must be obtained after passing the test at a FINA Artistic Swimming Development School - Advanced level prior to attending a FINA Artistic Swimming Certification School. The level of meets that the judge attends will be considered. Advanced judges are encouraged to gain experience outside of their federation.

3.3 Assessment

At the conclusion of the school all the judges will take a test. In order to pass a FINA Artistic Swimming Development School participants must:

- Obtain a minimum score of 80% at the Beginner level
- Obtain a minimum score of 80% at the Intermediate level
- Obtain a minimum score of 85% at the Advanced level

Judges who pass the school will receive a diploma, which entitles the holder to participate at the next FINA Artistic Swimming Development School level subject to having obtained the required judging hours as described in section 3.2.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Participants must obtain a minimum score of 85% at the Advanced level test. They then must judge for a minimum of sixty (60) hours. This judging activity must be reported to their Continental Representative before they will be considered eligible to participate at a FINA Artistic Swimming Certification School.

The judging activity must be sent to the Continental Representative using the Activity Report Form for new Judges, with a copy sent to the FINA Office for approval.

3.4 Qualification Framework

3.4.1 Content


The curriculum and topics to be provided in each level are established by the FINA TASC.

The content covered is broken down into five groups including: Figures, Routines, Scoring, Referee/Chief Recorder and Ethics.

Progressive modules from the five groups are covered at each school and are based on the competencies required of each school.
3.4.2 Competencies to be achieved at the end of each school level are:

**Beginner level**
- Participants will become familiar with the [FINA Artistic Swimming Rules (2017-2021)](https://www.fina.org)
- Participants will demonstrate understanding of Basic Body Positions and Basic Movements, using Appendices II and III of the [FINA Artistic Swimming Manual for Judges, Coaches & Referees 2017-2021](https://www.fina.org)
- Participants will analyse 12 and Under Figures, using Basic principles, the Expanded Marking scale and Guiding scales for Height and Splits
- Participants will be introduced to Judging Free Routines, more specifically to judging Execution, Artistic Impression and Difficulty
- Participants will discuss Ethics for Judges, including the importance of disclosing all Conflicts of Interest

**Intermediate level**
- Participants will be thoroughly familiar and know how to use the [FINA Artistic Swimming Rules (2017-2021)](https://www.fina.org) and the [FINA Artistic Swimming Manual for Judges, Coaches & Referees 2017-2021](https://www.fina.org)
- Participants will demonstrate understanding of judging 13-15 figures and Junior/Senior figures on the current list. They will be able to discuss the NVTs and PVs of each figure and use this information to successfully judge these figures
- Participants will continue to work on Free routine judging (Solo, Duet, Mixed Duet and Team) with more emphasis on Free Combination and Mixed Duet
- Participants will explore the responsibilities of the Referee and Assistant Referees
- Participants will discuss Ethics for Judges, including the importance of disclosing all Conflicts of Interest

**Advanced level**
- Participants will be thoroughly familiar and will use the [FINA Artistic Swimming Rules (2017-2021)](https://www.fina.org) and the [FINA Artistic Swimming Manual for Judges, Coaches & Referees 2017-2021](https://www.fina.org)
- Participants will review Figures and demonstrate understanding of the deductions to be used as a tool for figure judging
- Participants will demonstrate understanding of Technical Elements for Solo, Duet, Mixed Duet and Team (Junior and Senior)
- Participants will learn how to judge Technical Routines and will practice judge many technical routines with emphasis on the Elements panel
- Participants will discuss Highlight Routines and will practice judge
- Participants will further investigate the judging of Difficulty in all routines
- Participants will analyze routines from the most recent FINA World Championships
- Participants will discuss Ethics for Judges, including the importance of disclosing all Conflicts of Interest
- Participants will explore the responsibilities of the Referee and Assistant Referees
4. FINA Artistic Swimming Certification Schools for Judges

4.1 Overview

The FINA Artistic Swimming Certification Schools will prepare and certify highly qualified judges wishing to be registered or to remain registered on the FINA List.

IMPORTANT NOTE: In order to be considered for judging at a FINA Competition, a Judge must have successfully passed the Judges Exam administered at one of the FINA Artistic Swimming Certification Schools for Judges every four years unless otherwise directed by the FINA TASC (FINA Instructors are exempt).

FINA Evaluators must attend a FINA Certification School for Judges and pass the test once every four years unless otherwise directed by the FINA TASC (FINA Instructors are exempt).

Judges who do not pass the Certification Exam have a second opportunity to rewrite the exam within the one year period and before November 1st of the following year.

4.2 Specific course requirements

The FINA Artistic Swimming Certification Schools are open to those judges wishing to be registered or to remain registered on the FINA List. All the candidates must comply with one of the following requirements:

- **New judges** are eligible to attend a Certification School if they have passed the Advanced level school (minimum score 85%) and have registered at least sixty (60) hours of judging activity after the date of the advanced exam with their Continental Representative. Only those candidates having their judging activity approved by their Continental Representative are eligible to register for a FINA Artistic Swimming Certification School.
- **A Judges and G Judges** that are already on the FINA List and require certification may register to a Certification School without having previously passed the Advanced level school’s exam.

Priority for attendance at FINA Artistic Swimming Certification Schools shall be:

- Judges who have registered through the GMS for certification by no later than the registration deadline established per each FINA School
- One Coach per Federation is allowed to attend as an Observer, provided that he/she is registered through the FINA GMS by the established deadline and that the maximum number of participants (30) has not been reached. He/she is expected to attend all sessions except for the examination
- If there are additional spaces available, FINA age eligible active national level Judges (65 and under) and active national level Coaches may fill the remaining spots. They must be registered through the FINA GMS as an Observer and will be approved by FINA on a first come first serve basis
4.3 Assessment

To receive certification, a Judge must attend a FINA Artistic Swimming Certification School and pass the test with a minimum score of 85% for A Judges and 80% for G Judges.

4.4 Assessment retake policy

Judges who do not pass the exam may take it a second time by no later than 1st November at a FINA Artistic Swimming Development or Certification School:

- Judges rewriting the exam may choose to attend the entire course or sit for the exam;
- They must be registered through the FINA GMS by the established deadline;
- Please note that a judge is allowed to write two exams per year only.

4.4.1 FINA A Judges

A FINA A Judge must have attended a FINA Artistic Swimming Certification School for Judges and passed the certification exam once every four years with a score of 85% or higher.

- If a FINA A judge fails the certification exam on the first attempt with a score below 85% but passes the exam on the second attempt with a score of 85% or higher, he/she remains on the FINA List in the A Category.
- If a FINA A judge fails the certification exam on the first attempt with a score below 85% but passes the exam on the second attempt with a score between 80-84%, he/she is demoted to FINA G judge status.
- If a FINA A judge fails the certification exam on the first attempt with a score below 85% and fails the certification exam with a score below 80% on the second attempt, he/she will be removed from the FINA List.

IMPORTANT NOTE: A FINA A Judge who has been demoted to a FINA G judge status may continue to judge and to receive evaluations that will be considered for re promotion to FINA A status. Evaluations from the previous two years will be considered along with at least two (2) current evaluations.

All additional criteria specified on the FINA Artistic Swimming Manual for Judges, Coaches & Referees 2017-2021 in the Section 1 - To remain on the A List must be followed.

4.4.2 FINA G Judges

A FINA G Judge must have attended a FINA Artistic Swimming Certification School for Judges and passed the certification exam once every four years with a score of 80% or higher.

- If a FINA G judge fails the certification exam on the first attempt with a score below 80% but passes on the second attempt with a score of 80% or higher, he/she remains on the FINA List in the G Category.
- If a FINA G judge fails the certification exam on the second attempt with a score below 80%, he/she will be removed from the FINA List.
4.4.2 FINA G Judges

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** To be considered for reinstatement to the FINA List, the Judge must attend a FINA Artistic Swimming Development School – Advanced level and pass the advanced level exam with a minimum score of 85%.

In addition, the judge must comply with the following steps for reinstatement in the G category:

- Participants must obtain a minimum score of 85% at the Advanced level test. After the judge passes the Advanced level test, he/she must do a practicum and judge at competitions for a minimum of sixty (60) hours. When the judge has completed the judge practicum, his/her activity must be submitted to the Continental Representative for approval. Once the Continental Representative has approved the judging activity in the log, the judge will then become eligible to write the Certification exam.

- The judge must attend a FINA Artistic Swimming Certification School and pass the test with a minimum score of 80%. Judges do not go onto the FINA List until after they pass the Certification test.

- The judge must have his/her nomination for the FINA List submitted by his/her National Federation.

4.5 Procedure for non-attendance at a FINA AS Certification School or Fast Track

4.5.1 FINA A Judges

FINA A Judges who have been prevented from attending a Certification School for personal reasons may submit a written request to the FINA TASC Commission and to the FINA Office, with a copy sent to the Continental Representative, to be considered as a candidate for the FINA Fast Track Programme for reinstatement in the A category.

In order to be considered by the TASC for reinstatement as a FINA A Judge, the candidate must provide the following documents to the TASC Commission and to the FINA Office:

- Judge evaluations for the past four (4) years
- Judge activity both nationally and internationally including on continent and off continent events
- Reasons for not being able to attend the FINA AS Certification School nor write and/or pass the exam

The judge would additionally have to commit to doing the following Fast Track Activities by November 1st of the following year:

- Attend a full Certification School
- Pass the exam with a score of 85% or more
- Obtain a minimum of two (2) evaluations of Very Good (5) or Good (4) rating with a bias rating of 3 from a current FINA certified Evaluator
- Have the nomination submitted by their Federation to the FINA Office by November 1\textsuperscript{st} of the next year

The FINA Judges with previous A status that have been removed from the list must have activated the Fast Track within the first year of being demoted from the A category to the G category.
4.5.2 FINA G Judges

FINA G Judges who do not write the Certification School’s exam by November 1 in the year of their nomination will be removed from the FINA List.

The steps to be followed for reinstatement in the G category are described in section 4.4.2

5. FINA Artistic Swimming – Online Exam for Certified Judges

Each FINA certified judge (unless otherwise directed by the FINA TASC) must annually take the online FINA Artistic Swimming – Exam for Certified Judges.

A minimum score of 85% for A Judges and 80% for G Judges will be required to earn a passing grade and be eligible to judge at FINA events.

5.1 Procedure for FINA A/G Judges failing or missing the FINA AS Online Exam

If a candidate does not pass or does not write the annual FINA Artistic Swimming – Exam for Certified Judges within the one month period, he/she will be listed on the FINA AS Judges List but will not be eligible to officiate at FINA events during the current season.

The judge will need to write and pass the online FINA Artistic Swimming – Exam for Certified Judges the following year and will need to demonstrate judging activity within his/her region.

5.2 Qualification Framework

- The FINA Artistic Swimming Rules (2017-2021)
- The FINA Artistic Swimming Manual for Judges, Coaches & Referees 2017-2021
- Figures
  - New figures and figures on 12 and U, 13/15 and Jr./Sr. lists
  - Application of deductions
- Technical Elements (Seniors, Juniors)
- Technical Routines (Solo, Duet, Mixed Duet, Team)
- Free Routines (Solo, Duet, Mixed Duet, Team, Free Combination)
- Analysis of Difficulty and Artistic Impression
- Highlight Routine
- Referee responsibilities
- Ethics
6. FINA List

The FINA Artistic Swimming Judges List is valid from 1st January to 31st December of each year.

Each National Federation can apply for a maximum of ten (10) FINA A Judges and a maximum of five (5) FINA G Judges.

- Criteria to be observed for A Judges: Certification School Exam passed for the current quadrennial with a minimum score of 85% and Online Exam for Certified Judges passed each year;
- Criteria to be observed for G Judges: Certification School Exam passed for the current quadrennial with a minimum score of 80% and Online Exam for Certified Judges passed each year;
- Criteria to be observed for new judges: Certification School Exam passed for the current quadrennial with a minimum score of 80% and Online Exam for Certified Judges passed each year.

IMPORTANT NOTE: National Federations must submit their applications for the FINA List every year without failure. On each application, the candidate’s yearly hours of judging must have been justified to the Continental Representative. In addition, the applicant must have passed the Online Test for Certified Judges every year.

Judges who miss a year will be demoted and considered as new judges. The federation will be held to the quotas applying to new judges.

6.1 Age limits

Please note that the maximum age for a Judge to be included in the FINA Artistic Swimming Judges List is sixty-five (65) as per the FINA Rule BL 6:

The maximum age of Technical Officials (Judges, Starters and Referees) when officiating at FINA Championships or FINA Competitions, except Masters and Water Polo, shall be sixty five (65) years when application is made for the respective FINA List.

6.2 Conflicts of interest

Judges with a conflict of interest shall not be selected for events/competitions. The following categories of people are deemed to have a conflict of interest:

a) a Relative of a Competitor
b) a current Coach of a Competitor or Relative of a current Coach of a Competitor (a parent, child, sibling or spouse)
c) a Team Manager or Relative of a Team Manager
d) an inhabitant of the same household of the competitor and any of a), b) and c)
e) a paid staff of a federation or someone who receives money from any federation that has competitors in this competition

Relative refers to a person connected with another by blood or marriage (including boyfriend and/or girlfriend). Relative also includes step relationships and is any of parent, child, sibling, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin, grandparent or spouse. Coach refers to any person who coaches figures and/or routines on a regular basis to the Competitor.
6.2 Conflicts of interest (cont.)

Conflicts of interest must be clearly stated on the nomination form for new judges and on the activity report of judges being renewed.

Judges must observe FINA Code of Ethics Section F (Conflict of Interest) of the FINA Artistic Swimming Manual for Judges, Coaches & Referees 2017-2021 and if a judge neglects to declare a situation of a potential conflict of interest, the FINA President or one of the FINA Executive members may refer the matter to the Ethics Panel.

6.3 Nationality

Please take into consideration the FINA GR 2.5 about the judge’s nationality:

*When a competitor or competition official represents his/her country in a competition, he/she shall be a citizen, whether by birth or naturalisation, of the nation he/she represents, provided that a naturalised citizen shall have lived in that country for at least one year prior to that competition. Competitors, who have more than one nationality according to the laws of the respective nations must choose one “Sport Nationality”. This choice shall be exercised by the first representation of the competitor for one (1) of the countries.*

*As an additional requirement for the Sport Countries, when a competitor or competition official is eligible to represent a Sport Country (within the meaning of FINA rule C 3.17), the Competitor or competition official shall establish the specific link with the Sport Country by one (1) of the following documents: (i) Birth certificate of the Competitor or competition official in the Sport Country; or (ii) Proof of current residency for at least twelve (12) months in the Sport Country (as provided in FINA Rule GR 2.6.1); or (iii) Birth certificate of the mother, father, grandmother or grandfather of the Competitor or competition official in the Sport Country.*