FINA WATER POLO REFEREES 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 participate 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.

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 referees training and certification system.

It is recommended that the candidates from developing countries in which few Water Polo events are organised and/or without Water Polo educational programmes in place, undertake the whole educational pathway for referees in order to become certified.

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 the quality of the existing ones.

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 Water Polo Development Schools**: Cater to those National Federations wishing to promote their national referees to be qualified as FINA Referees in the future. Candidates must be at least 16 years old. No prior officiating experience is required.

- **Online Pre-requisite Course and Test**: MANDATORY FOR CERTIFICATION. Mandatory online course for referees who want to attend a FINA Water Polo Certification School. Candidates must be at least 18 years old, must have two years of practical experience and must have passed a FINA WP Development School or an equivalent course offered by their NF/Continental Organisation.

- **FINA Water Polo Certification School**: MANDATORY FOR CERTIFICATION. Designed for experienced referees wishing to become eligible to officiate at FINA Events. Candidates must have obtained a score of 100% at the Online Pre-requisite Course and Test.

- **FINA Water Polo Referees Online Exam**: MANDATORY FOR RECERTIFICATION. Two years after being certified at a FINA Water Polo Certification School, all the certified referees must pass an Online Exam through the FINA Learning Platform.
1.1 Objectives

The main goals of this programme are to promote sports growth by offering a continuous learning pathway for active Water Polo referees:

- Building a bigger group of qualified Water Polo referees, raising the level of the existing ones
- Creating world-wide uniformity in the interpretation and the application of Water Polo rules, raising the quality of officiating
- Establishing a point of reference for the FINA National Member Federations and the Continental Organisations’ educational programmes

2. FINA Water Polo Development Schools for Referees

2.1 Overview

In order to begin the training as a Water Polo referee, FINA offers to all National Federations the possibility to host a FINA Water Polo Development School.

This course is designed to meet the needs of those National Federations who have requested referees instruction and do not have equivalent training programmes in place.

- This school caters for starting referees, interested and willing to officiate at a National level and having ambition to continue at an International level
- The candidates must be at least 16 years old at the start of the FINA Development School programme
- No previous officiating experience is required to start this referees training programme

2.2 Course description and format

The FINA Water Polo Development Schools are held over a duration of two (2) days, including an exam.

The official working language for the FINA Water Polo Development Schools for Referees is English. However, the schools may be delivered in French or Spanish depending on the lecturer’s availability.

Instruction will be given by lecturer(s) of the FINA TWPC or by instructors appointed by the FINA TWPC.

At the start of the FINA Development School, a basic list of Water Polo terminology in English will be provided to the participants. All the candidates intending to attend a FINA Water Polo Certification School in the future must be able to use the most common Water Polo terminology in English.

2.3 Course requirements

Host Federations must have a minimum of ten (10) and a maximum of thirty (30) people attending a FINA Water Polo Development School.
All participants attending a FINA Water Polo Development School for Referees shall ensure that they comply with the below requirements:

- Be registered through the FINA GMS for a FINA Water Polo Development School for Referees as described in point 2.4
- Be at least 16 years of age at the start of the FINA Development School programme
- Demonstrate a minimum level of spoken and written skills in the language in which the course is delivered (English, French or Spanish)
- Fully participate in the course and complete all required assessments
- Agree to abide by the FINA Code of Ethics

### 2.4 Registration

All participants attending a FINA Water Polo Development School must be nominated by their National Federations through the FINA GMS by the registration deadline.

- Only fully submitted registrations will be considered for approval
- Please note that only approved participants may attend a FINA School

### 2.5 Assessment

For the written exam, the use of online resources and cell phones is not permitted. Paper dictionaries are allowed. Disciplinary actions will be taken against those who act in a dishonest way or for any misconduct.

At the conclusion of the school all the candidates will take a test. In order to pass a FINA Water Polo Development School participants must obtain a minimum score of 60%.

### 2.6 Qualification Framework

#### 2.6.1 Programme

**Day 1**

- **14.00 – 17.00** Theory
- **17.00 – 17.30** Coffee break
- **17.30 – 19.00** Pool session – Age Group Match with short evaluation of referees
- **19.00 – 21.00** Theory

**Day 2**

- **09.00 – 10.30** Theory
- **10.30 – 11.30** Pool session – Senior Match with short evaluation of referees
- **11.30 – 12.30** Pool session – Age Group Match with short evaluation of referees
- **12.30 – 13.30** Lunch
- **13.30 – 16.30** Theory
- **16.30 – 17.00** Coffee break
- **17.00 – 20.30** Theory + Exam
- **20.30** End of FINA Water Polo Development School
2.6.2 **Competencies** to be achieved at the end of the development school are:

- Understanding the role of a Water Polo referee
- Implement the rules of Water Polo at different levels of skills

3. **Online Pre-requisite Course and Test**¹

3.1 **Overview**

In order to continue the training as a Water Polo referee and to be prepared to undertake a FINA Water Polo Certification School, an Online Pre-requisite Course and Test will be available through the *FINA Learning Platform* for those referees who meet the following conditions:

- Be at least 18 years old at the start of the FINA Certification School programme
- Have at least two years of practical experience as a referee
- Have passed a FINA Water Polo Development School or an equivalent course offered by their National Federation or Continental Organisation recognized and approved by the FINA TWPC
- Be registered through the FINA GMS for a FINA Water Polo Certification School for Referees as described in point 3.4

3.2 **Objectives**

The Online Pre-requisite Course and Test is aimed to:

- Verify the candidate’s knowledge of Water Polo terminology in English
- Guarantee a certain entry level and set the same standard for all the referees worldwide
- Refresh and test the Water Polo rules and interpretation knowledge of all the candidates
- Standardise the referees’ instruction on Water Polo rules and interpretations

3.3 **Course description and format**

The Online Pre-requisite Course and Test is an integral part of the referees’ pathway:

- The online course and the test will be available in English through the *FINA Learning Platform*
- Each participant will receive access to the FINA Learning Platform on the day following the registration deadline. The login information will be sent to the candidate’s email address as submitted in the registration
- At the end of the online course, a mandatory exam will test the candidate’s English level and his/her knowledge of the Water Polo rules and terminology
- The candidate must have passed the test before the beginning of the FINA Water Polo Certification School he/she has been registered for
- Once a participant has passed the test, he/she will be able to download a certificate that must be shown to the lecturers at the beginning of the school

¹ *The Online Pre-requisite Course and Test is under development and will be available soon.*
3.4 Registration

Candidates complying with all the eligibility requirements as described in point 3.1 must be nominated by their National Federations to attend a FINA Water Polo Certification School for Referees.

- The nominations must be submitted through the FINA GMS by the registration deadline
- Only fully submitted registrations including the candidate’s personal email address will be considered for approval
- The approvals will be done on a first come first served basis
- The registration will be closed by the registration deadline or once the maximum number of thirty (30) participants has been reached

3.5 Assessment

At the conclusion of the Online Pre-requisite Course and Test all the candidates must take a mandatory online exam.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Only those candidates obtaining a score of 100% at the Online Pre-requisite Test may participate in the FINA Water Polo Certification School for Referees they have been registered for.

4. FINA Water Polo Certification Schools for Referees

4.1 Overview

The FINA Water Polo Certification Schools prepare and certify candidates seeking to become FINA Water Polo Referees.

The programme consists of two parts: a compulsory Online Pre-requisite Course and Test that each participant must complete through the FINA Learning Platform followed by the FINA Water Polo Certification School held at the Host Federation’s chosen location.

In order to be eligible for a FINA Water Polo Certification School a referee must fulfil the following conditions:

- Be at least 18 years old at the start of the FINA Certification School programme
- Have at least two years of practical experience as a referee
- Have passed a FINA Water Polo Development School or an equivalent course offered by their National Federation or Continental Organisation recognized and approved by the FINA TWPC

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** In order to be selected to officiate at the Olympic Games, Qualification Tournaments, FINA World Championships, Water Polo World Cups, FINA Water Polo World Leagues and other designated FINA Competitions, referees must be nominated by their National Federations for the FINA Water Polo Referees List subject to meeting the List criteria.

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2 The Online Pre-requisite Course and Test is under development and will be available soon.
4.2 Course description and format

- The FINA Water Polo Certification Schools are held over a duration of two and a half (2.5) days including an exam.
- **The official working language for the FINA Water Polo Certification Schools is English.** Please note that having a good command of English is not only mandatory to follow the school programme but it is also necessary to fulfil the referees' duties at FINA Competitions, as partner referees use audio equipment during the matches and must attend the post-match evaluations with other delegates.
- The curriculum will be based on the [FINA Water Polo Manual 2019-2021](#).
- Instruction will be given by lecturer(s) of the FINA TWPC or by instructors appointed by the FINA TWPC.
- The maximum number of registered participants for all the FINA Water Polo Certification Schools is thirty (30) people. The registration for the schools will be closed by the registration deadline or once the maximum number of participants has been reached.

4.3 Course requirements

At least ten (10) candidates must attend in order to host a FINA Water Polo Certification School.

All participants attending a FINA Water Polo Certification School must ensure that they comply with the following requirements:

- Be registered through the FINA GMS as described in point 3.4
- Fulfil all the eligibility criteria as described in point 4.1
- Have obtained a score of 100% at the Online Pre-requisite Test
- Agree to abide by the FINA Code of Ethics

4.4 Registration

All the participants must be nominated by their National Federations through the FINA GMS by the registration deadline as described in point 3.4

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The access to the Online Pre-requisite Course and Test will only be sent to those candidates registered to a FINA Water Polo Certification School. Only those candidates who pass the Online Pre-requisite Test may attend the FINA Water Polo Certification School they have been registered for.

4.5 Assessment

In order to pass a FINA Water Polo Certification School a candidate must do the following: pass the Online Pre-requisite Course and Test through the [FINA Learning Platform](#) before the beginning of the school and obtain a minimum score of 70% at the FINA Water Polo Certification School's exam.

For the written exam, interpreters, use of online resources and cell phones are not permitted. Paper dictionaries are allowed.

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.
IMPORTANT NOTE: The certification will be valid for a four-year period provided that the referee passes the FINA Water Polo Referees Online Exam two years after being certified at a FINA Water Polo Certification School. The FINA Water Polo Referees Online Exam is mandatory, referees who do not pass it will lose their certification.

4.6 Qualification Framework

4.6.1 Programme

Day 1

10.00 Roll call
Welcome by LOC
Welcome by the lecturers and introduction of the participants

10.15 Topic 1: Water Polo History and FINA Project Reform

Topic 2: New Rules
Discussion – Topics 1 and 2

11.30 Coffee break

12.00 Topic 3: New Rules by Video Clips
Discussion – Topic 3

13.30 Lunch break

14.30 Topic 4: TWPC Observations and Clarifications
Topic 5: Observations and Clarifications by Video Clips
(impeding – exclusions center position – contra fouls)
Discussion – Topic 5

16.00 Coffee break

16.30 Topic 6: Observations and Clarifications by Video Clips (cont.)
(violence – tactical fouls)

18.00 Discussion – Topic 6

18.15 End of session

Day 2

09.00 Topic 7: Referees Pathway
Topic 8: Guidelines for Water Polo Referees
Topic 9: Comparison Gwangju 2019 and Budapest 2017 (M/W Matches)

10.15 Discussion – Topics 7, 8 and 9

10.30 Coffee break

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3 The FINA Water Polo Referees Online Exam is under development and will be available soon.
11.00  **Topic 10:** Penalty Fouls with Video Clips  
**Topic 11:** Re-entry Fouls  
Discussion – Topics 10 and 11

12.30  Lunch break

13.30  **Topic 12:** Video Integrated Monitoring System  
**Topic 13:** Video Review Protocol  
**Topic 14:** Video Clips: VAR, Protocol, Goal/No Goal Situations  
Discussion – Topics 12, 13 and 14

15.00  Coffee break

15.30  **Topic 15:** Video Clips: 2 m. Situations  
**Topic 16:** Video Clips: Post Position Situations  
**Topic 17:** Video Clips Women’s Game  
Discussion – Topics 15, 16 and 17

Questions & Answers

17.00  Rule test examination

18.00  End of session

**Day 3**

09.00  **Topic 18:** Code of Conduct for FINA Referees  
**Topic 19:** Guidelines for Intercontinental Activities of FINA Referees  
Discussion – Topics 18, 19 test  
**Topic 20:** Discussion about questions from the rule test

11.00  Certificates award

11.30  End of FINA Water Polo School

4.6.2  **Competencies** to be achieved at the end of the certification school are:

- Proficient implementation of the rules of Water Polo

5.  **FINA Water Polo Technical Workshops**

A range of FINA Water Polo Technical Workshops will be organised before the start of the FINA Water Polo Tournaments such as Men/Women’s Water Polo World Cups, Men/Women’s Water Polo World Leagues, Men/Women’s Youth Water Polo Championships, Men/Women’s Junior Water Polo Championships and Men/Women’s World under 16 Water Polo Cups.

Please note that the technical workshops will be only open to those referees appointed for the above-mentioned competitions. The course together with their performance during the event will serve as recertification.
5.1 Programme

Roll call: Referees and Participating Countries' Representatives

09.00 Start of General Part: Team Representatives and Referees

Welcome by LOC
Welcome by FINA TWPC (Vice) Chairman
Introduction of the lecturers

**Topic 1:** New Rules

10.30 End of General Part

10.30 - 10.45 Coffee break

**Introduction:** Referees of the Technical Workshop

**Topic 2:** Observations of the FINA TWPC
**Topic 3:** Clarification on certain situations
**Topic 4:** WP Rules Clips

12.30 - 13.30 Lunch break

**Topic 4:** WP Rules Clips (cont.)

15.30 WP Rules Test for all the referees participating in the competition

17.00 End of FINA Water Polo Technical Workshop

5.2 Assessment

In order to pass a FINA Water Polo Technical Workshop a referee must attend the entire course and must obtain a minimum score of 70% at the Water Polo Rules Test.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The certification will be valid for a four-year period provided that the referee passes the FINA Water Polo Referees Online Exam two years after being certified at a FINA Water Polo Technical Workshop. The FINA Water Polo Referees Online Exam is mandatory, referees who do not pass it will lose their certification.

6. Recertification

The FINA Water Polo Referees Online Exam is a mandatory refreshment course for all the FINA certified referees.

For recertification, a certified referee must do one of the following:

1. Pass the FINA Water Polo Referees Online Exam through the [FINA Learning Platform](#) two years after being certified at a FINA Water Polo Certification School. The last two years of the certification period start if the referee has passed the Online Exam.

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*The FINA Water Polo Referees Online Exam is under development and will be available soon.*
IMPORTANT NOTE: Referees failing or missing the Online Exam in the required year will lose their certification status and will need to pass the FINA Water Polo Certification School exam again.

2. After the four-year certification period, the referee must pass the FINA Water Polo Certification School exam again.