



Swim England East Region
Minutes of the Artistic Swimming Leadership Group Meeting
1st February 2025 at 10am, via Zoom

Present Amy Davis (AD) East Region Artistic Swimming Manager
Amy Bryant (AB) Hatfield
Tom Brennan (TB) Aqualina
Emma Chapman (EC) Dacorum
Emily Gower (EG) Norwich
Also present James Salmon (JSa) Regional Manager

25/01 Welcome and apologies

25/01.1 Apologies received from Karen Brennan. Laura Neary was unavailable at the time of the meeting.

25/02 Declarations of conflict of interest

25/02.1 AD and TB confirmed that they had filled in the declaration of conflict-of-interest form provided by JSa.

25/02.2 TB raised that he may have a potential conflict of interest as his daughter is a paid coach for the Development Squad. He confirmed that he would abstain from any conversations on this matter which may have an influence on a payment she may receive. He questioned how far this would extend, i.e., would it extend to his opinion on whether a development squad should be continued. This was discussed briefly.

25/02.3 AB declared a conflict of interest for the item in minute 25/09.3.

25/03 Previous minutes

25/03.1 The minutes from the previous meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. They were confirmed as a true reflection of what was discussed.

25/04 Plan and Budget

25/04.1 JSa confirmed that Keith Belton is still working on the budget, but that it has essentially all been approved.

25/05 Grading days 2025

- 25/05.01 AD reported that the grading day held the weekend prior to the meeting went very well, with good results.
- 25/05.02 The next grading day will be held in Witham and is booked for 26th April 2025. It is being held at the same time as Champs. As previously advised, Aqualina will not be attending, and this means that there will be fewer level 2 and level 3 judges. AD encouraged those attending to provide some judges.
- 25/05.03 EG advised that she currently has two judges on a level 2 course.
- 25/05.04 19th and 20th July had also been discussed as dates for grading. The possible venues were discussed. Hemel Hempstead is usually available on a Sunday. A pool closer to EG was considered, and EG suggested hosting at their club's pool on 19th.

Action: EG to make some enquiries about hosting the grading day. EC to also enquire about the pool at Hemel Hempstead for those dates as a backup.

EC added that although she will be unable to attend the day because of holiday, she can probably still send judges etc.

- 25/05.05 The other dates being considered were one in November, and 6th December 2025. These will be discussed at a later date.
- 25/05.06 TB has not yet made the booking for the routine day on 27th September 2025, but will do so.

25/06

Competitions for 2025

- 25/06.1 AD confirmed that the competitions are booked for the year. The dates are:
- 8th February
 - 29th March
 - 10th May – ungraded figures and combos, Masters' tech duet and solo
 - 18th October – solos and duets (and figures)
- 25/06.2 AD mentioned the decision to have shorter solos and duets - about a minute and a half for solos, and two minutes for duets.
- 25/06.3 There were no issues at the competition in October 2024. Coming through the meeting room worked well, with parents dropping the athletes off at the door and going straight up to the gallery, not going into the changing rooms. AD will send out emails to advise of this arrangement at future events.
- 25/06.4 AB asked whether the Masters' tech which had been agreed for March was in the conditions. AD responded that she had not added it to the conditions and that if there were any Masters who would like to do the Masters' tech, they can be entered under 'other conditions'. The same will apply in May. It was clarified that Masters swimmers can perform a tech routine as a duet but under Masters' rules.



25/06.5 AD confirmed that there are Masters' combos at both the March and May competitions.

25/07 Officials courses

25/07.1 TB confirmed that three people had completed the judge level 1 course through London Region. AD will contact Jenny Gray in May about providing another course. AD will also contact other tutors. She raised a comment from Jenny which questioned the readiness of the course and the materials. TB said that this was also reflected in the feedback from the attendees. AD added that she has been informed that the materials will be updated.

AB suggested that people should be approached about delivering a course online, as a possible alternative to a face-to-face delivery. Online delivery could potentially making it easier time-wise and accessibility-wise for both the presenter and the candidates. AB has raised these matters with Swim England as there is evidence of a wish for online training to be available. Online courses could also mean there was less waiting time for a course.

AD has contacted Hannah Secher to ask if there is an introduction to judging or similar guidance available. So far Hannah has not been successful in getting Swim England to put something together, for example as a Webex or interactive learning. Hannah will continue to ask, and AB will work on this too.

TB also added that some of the feedback was regarding the high cost of £50 per person for the course. AB argued that there should be one standard price, as some people were getting the training for free. She suggested the costs saved by doing online courses could be used to subsidise the in-person costs. This is something she has raised. TB added that the fees are paid by the club; the volunteers are not expected to pay, but it is a lot of money.

25/07.2 AD would like to provide a scorer's course, as scorers are few in number. She would be able to deliver the course herself, but will look into having someone else do it. AB offered her assistance with the planning and preparation if AD decides to deliver the course.

25/07.3 AB has an Assistant Artistic Swimming Coach course starting on the Tuesday following the meeting. Currently there are ten candidates, including four from Aqualina and one from Norwich.

25/08 Regional Games

25/08.1 TB reported that it is all running well at the moment. He believes the next session is in March, although nothing has been published yet.

AD confirmed that there was provision in the budget to continue after the actual Games in May and start the next year's tranche. AD had budgeted to get all the money in September, More had also been added for expenses etc.

25/09

Any other urgent business

- 25/09.1 AD confirmed the format for the next competition will be the same as in October – figures, medals and then routines.
- 25/09.2 AD reported that she has the new sound system. TB mentioned an issue he has had with the batteries for his unit which were not lasting.
- 25/09.3 AB raised a conflict of interest in relation to a company she works for. The company is running a face-to-face safeguarding course at Hertfordshire Sports Village, Hatfield, on the 23rd as part of the Coach Education Week. AB confirmed that the course is approved by Swim England.
- 25/09.4 TB reported a matter discussed at the Hertfordshire meeting. There had been a lot of feedback on the recent changes to grades and routine grades and the lack of resources and materials. Ian Mackenzie has raised the matter with Swim England.
- AB mentioned that the issue of grading had been brought up at the Swim England Sport Operations Committee and the Head of Development, Claire Coleman, had asked for feedback. AB had sent an extensive email.
- 25/09.5 EC asked AD to provide access to the drive for uploading the coach cards and music. AD actioned this during the meeting.
- 25/09.6 AD confirmed that there are lots of helpers for the competition at the weekend following the meeting.

25/10

Confidential items

- 25/10.1 There were none.

25/11

Meeting dates

- 25/11.1 Date of next meeting: 12th April 2025.