

Swim England

Swimming & Para-Swimming

The Swim England Talent Team aim to create an integrated, inclusive environment and progressive pathway which supports the development of talented athletes.

Talent Pathway Selection Criteria 2026-2027

This criteria aims to promote transparency, fairness and inclusion to all of our aspiring young swimmers.

We will continue to collaborate with our Counties, Regions and Aquatics GB to develop our pathway activities to further enhance the athlete's daily training environment, enabling swimmers and coaches to have continued support along their journey.

We understand that talent development is complex and not linear and to help embrace this we will continue to consider the use of discretionary selections. When activating these discretionary selections, all or some of the following will aid decisions:

- The chronological, developmental and training age of the swimmer
- A swimmer's engagement, commitment, attitude and work ethic
- A discussion with the athlete's home coach on the commitment and potential of the swimmer
- Discussions with Aquatics GB

Pathway overview and rationale

“To guarantee the delivery of quality English swimmers and coaches on to Aquatics GB Swimming World Class Programmes.”

- I. The strategic goal of Swim England Talent is to create a system that will identify, support and enhance the development of athletes for the Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games. Programme activities are designed to engage with swimmers whose age and stage in the 'England Talent Pathway' is of relevance and continues on the trajectory into World Class Programmes.
- II. This allows the Swim England National Talent Team to identify swimmers to attend programme activities using surveys, event rankings and discretionary considerations.
- III. It is our philosophy and intention to promote a fully inclusive, athlete and workforce centered, process driven, talent development pathway. We encourage conversations with all stakeholders, on how to continually help, support and encourage selected athletes and workforce throughout. This allows the finite resources of the programme to be applied in a flexible and targeted manner to best support individual needs in line with the overall pathway aims.

Transgender and Non-Binary Competition Policy

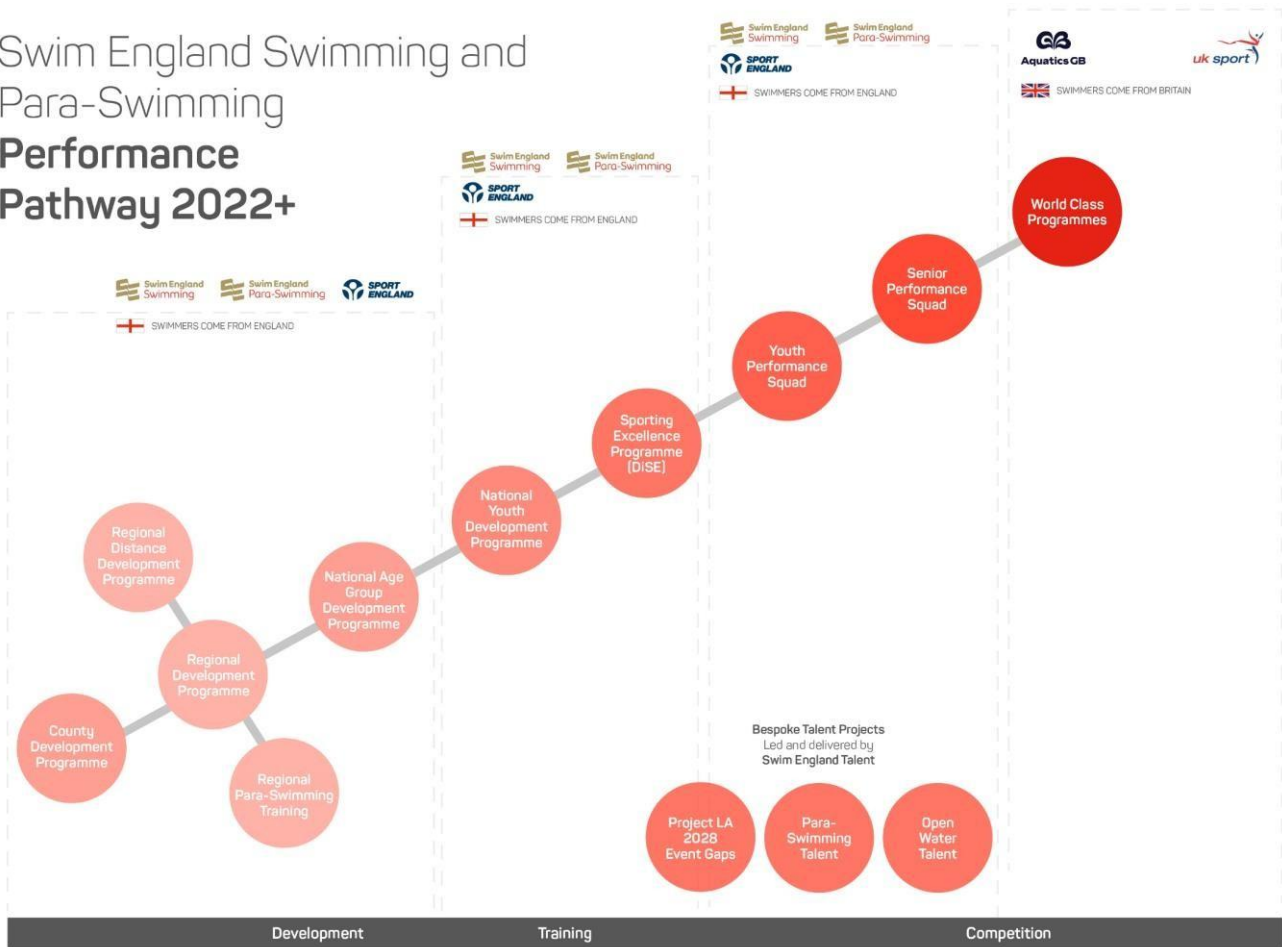
From the 1st September 2023, Swim England’s Transgender and Non-Binary Competition Policy has replaced the existing competition categories of ‘Female’ and ‘Male’ with the categories of ‘Female’ and ‘Open’.

However, as per Clause 7.1 of the policy, any trans or non-binary competitors seeking selection to any of the Swim England talent pathways shall be required to be compliant with the eligibility criteria detailed in the World Aquatics Policy on Eligibility for the Men’s and Women’s Competition Categories prior to being eligible for selection. This is to ensure that selected competitors are eligible to compete at the respective national/ international competition(s).

World Aquatics ‘Policy on Eligibility for the Men’s and Women’s Competition Categories’ continues to use the terms Women/Female and Men/Male. As such, and for the avoidance of doubt, female athletes shall be selected from the ‘Female’ category, male athletes will be selected from eligible competitors within the ‘Open’ category. Non-binary athletes will be eligible for selection on the basis of their birth sex. If unsure, please contact equality@swimming.org

As an evolving area across the sport sector, this will be reviewed 12 months following the date of publication, or following an update to World Aquatics policy, whichever is sooner.

Table 1.



Swim England

Regional Development Programme (RDP)

This is the second step on the Swim England Talent Pathway which is implemented and delivered by each region with support from the Swim England Talent team.

Programme aims to support athletes and the workforce to:

- Further develop fundamental movement skills and core aquatic skills to advance physical literacy
- Further develop technical and skills across all four competitive strokes and turns
- Understand the culture of Swim England and its associated talent programmes
- Develop the characteristics in-line with the swimmer's age and 'Development' stage of the Optimal Athlete Development Framework (OADF)
- Increase opportunities for the workforce delivering at this stage of the pathway, to experience and facilitate an integrated and inclusive training environment

Key consideration criteria

- 13 years of age on 31st December 2026
- Up to 48 swimmers (24 male and 24 female) per region selected from Long Course **200m Individual Medley** Rankings
- If regions do not have the minimum number of swimmers for each sex they can reduce as required, or increase the number of swimmers of one particular sex
- To reflect relative age, two selection bands will be implemented, with the aim of selecting equally between the two where possible;
 - Selection Band A – birthday between and including 1st January to 30th June
 - Selection Band B – birthday between and including 1st July to 31st December
- Additional selections, if required, can be made for either selection band from swimmers meeting the required minimum standard.
- Times used for selection to the RDP must be taken from the Swim England national rankings, and be achieved between 1st January 2025 and 4th August 2025
- Any exceptional short course performances can be considered at the discretion of the RDP Programme Lead/Head Coach
- Swimmers will be selected for their RDP based on the region their club is affiliated to
- Swimmers will have worked with their home coach to achieve the standard of **levels 3 & 4** of the **Swim England Club Awards**. Confirmation of these standards being achieved will be signed off by the head coach
- Para-swimmers will be selected nationally by the Swim England Talent Officers and selections will be communicated to the respective region **see general conditions for more information*
- Up to 6 para-swimmers per region (**nationally selected from 2 IPC events** included within the total of
- 48 swimmers) **see general conditions for more information*
- As a minimum, swimmers will only be considered where they are equal to, or in excess of the below World Aquatics Points (WAP) / Aquatics GB Para-Swimming Points (BPSP)
- **Please note, achieving these points does not guarantee selection to a talent programme;**

Sex	Age	WAP (long course)
Male & Female	13	300

Sex	Age	Impairment	BPSP (long course)
Male & Female	13	Physical (1-10)	300 event 1 & 250 event 2*
Male & Female	13	Visual (11-13)	300 event 1 & 225 event 2
Male & Female	13	Intellectual (14)	400 event 1 & 350 event 2

**PI selection 2 strokes where impairment allows*