

City of Glasgow Swimming Club - Squad Structure

Squad Outline

The City of Glasgow Swim Team are passionate and committed to developing our swimmers both emotionally and physically throughout their swimming journey. We aim to coach our swimmers to embrace a strong work-ethic, commitment, self-motivation and to install a life long love for the sport of swimming.

Our Coaching and development programs are designed to ensure our swimmers can achieve as much possible as they progress through the swimming pathway. We welcome swimmers of all levels, abilities and ages from learn to swim graduates through to Masters swimming. We have a place in our club for swimmers who wish to swim competitively or just for fitness.

Our squad structure has been developed to ensure that all swimmers reach their full potential whilst nurturing their love of swimming.

Foundation Squads

Junior Academy (JA)

Our Junior Academy section is an early introduction to our club swimming programme providing 2 x 1 hour coached sessions per week. The aim is to accelerate the learning process of young swimmers who are exiting swimming lessons to prepare them for the mainstream club programme. Children at this level are typically 6-9 years old, and can already swim 25m of 2-3 recognised swimming strokes without assistance. For optimum effectiveness, parents need to be willing to bring their child to both sessions, where one of our professional coaches will guide the swimmers through important technical instruction and a range of fun activities and aquatic skills. Children with anything other than very short hair should also wear a swim cap. A COGST cap will be provided free of charge once membership sign up has been completed.

Kit Required: Swimming goggles and tight fitting costume or trunks.

Foundation Squad (JF)

The Junior Foundation section is part two of the entry level to the COGST programme and there are three different Foundation squads, each with their own lead coach, Blue, Black and White. The squads are designed to introduce, develop and then consolidate all aspects of competitive swimming. This will include a lot of time teaching and developing stroke technique and skills such as starting and turning. In addition, swimmers will learn lane etiquette and use of the pace clock. As the swimmer grows in skill and confidence they will learn how to control their speed and practice training activities at different intensities. Some basic movement and stretching exercises on land will be introduced to Foundation swimmers in order to establish physical awareness, sound flexibility and correct posture alignment.

All swimmers in Foundation squads should attend an absolute minimum of 2 swim sessions per week and try their best to make it to all three available sessions. Remember the simple training motto: 3 to gain, 2 to maintain, 1 not worth the pain! It is not appropriate to attend only once a week in the COGST Foundation programme and families wishing to do this will be advised to join a more suitable participation based club instead.

Foundation squad swimmers will typically compete in: Internal Club Time Trials, Team Events (selection, e.g. Clyde Coast Mini League), and local Club Graded or Mini Meets.

These competitive opportunities will be primarily focussed on the following events: 25m and 50m of all four competitive strokes, plus 100m Freestyle and 100m Individual Medley (25m of each stroke in order Butterfly-Backstroke-Breaststroke-Frontcrawl). Swimmers should not progress to or enter longer races until they have reached a competent and effective standard over the respective shorter distance.

Kit Required: COGST cap, goggles, small kick-board, fins, snorkel and water bottle.

Development Squads (JD1 & JD2)

The club's Development section has two levels (Junior Development 1 and Junior Development 2) and two squads split Blue and Black in each level. After completing the Foundation programme, swimmers progress into one of the 'Junior Development 1' squads where swim training frequency is increased to five times per week and the swimmers are introduced to simple athletic training routines on land. A sixth weekly session is added at the 'Junior Development 2' stage as well as an additional focus on land based athletic movement skills. Pool sessions at both levels will continue to be primarily focused on technique development but with an increasing emphasis on building stamina and how to swim fast over short distances. The development squad structure recognises and facilitates that children develop at different rates and it is not uncommon for there to be a range of ages and abilities in these groups.

Junior Development 1

Swimmers in the first Development tier will normally be ages 9-11 years and are required to attend a minimum of 4 sessions per week from the 5 available. The range of competitions will be very similar to the Foundation level with internal time trials, local leagues and local club mini and graded meets regularly on the schedule. Competitive events are focused around the 50m and 100m distances of each stroke and 100m Individual Medley.

Kit Required: COGST cap, goggles, small kick-board, fins, snorkel and water bottle.

Junior Development 2

When children reach the second Development stage their programme is increased to 6 pool sessions per week, from which the minimum attendance is 4 albeit with an intention and commitment to attend 5 or all 6 sessions in order to optimise potential progress. Training will also include land based exercises before/after pool sessions. This is a key phase in the whole programme structure and often marks the point where swimmers begin to take the sport more seriously. These swimmers are typically aged 10-13 and will focus their racing attention on all 50m, 100m and 200m events at local league matches and club competitions that will hopefully lead to qualification for the West District Age Group Championships.

Kit Required: COGST cap, goggles, small kick-board, fins, pull-buoy, snorkel, small hand paddles and water bottle.

Age Group Squads

JAG & NAG

Swimmers entering the 'Age Group' section should be taking swimming seriously as one of their chosen sports and committing to the training programme which now increases to 8 weekly pool sessions plus land work. This section is split into two squads (Junior and National Age Group) which are normally split by age and stage of development. Junior Age Group will typically contain younger swimmers and early developers while National Age Group focuses on slightly older swimmers or late developers.

Junior Age Group

The typical ages for this group are 11-13 years for girls and 12-14 years for boys (although there will be some exceptions either side). Swimmers are usually required to attend a minimum of 6 of the 8 sessions, granted there may be some individual variations directed by squad coach. Competitions will include club meets, West District Championships and targeting qualification for and success at the Scottish National Age Group Championships. At this stage of the pathway swimmers will be encouraged to compete in the full range of competitive events both long and short course throughout each season.

Kit Required: COGST cap, goggles, small kick-board, fins, pull-buoy, snorkel, small hand paddles and water bottle.

National Age Group

The typical ages for this group are 13-15 years for girls and 14-16 years for boys (although there will be some exceptions either side). Swimmers are usually required to attend a minimum of 6 of the 8 sessions, granted there may be some individual variations directed by squad coach. Competitions will include club meets, West District Championships and targeting qualification for and success at the Scottish National Age Group Championships. At this stage of the pathway swimmers will be encouraged to compete in the full range of competitive events both long and short course throughout each season.

Kit Required: COGST cap, goggles, small kick-board, fins, pull-buoy, snorkel, small hand paddles and water bottle.

Performance Squads

The Club's Performance division is split into two sections: Senior and Elite. Swimmers in these groups are expected to be fully dedicated to achieving their full potential in the sport. Their behaviours should match this with attendance, discipline and work rate never being in question. As well as undertaking advanced and individualised training routines, Performance squad swimmers will receive guidance about other important areas of achieving success such as: nutrition, injury prevention, recovery, time management, team values, leadership, goal setting and mindset.

It is a requirement of the Performance squads that all swimmers participate fully in the competitive season and it is expected that any swimmer selected to represent the club in relays or team events will accept their position. A bespoke approach is taken to land training to recognise that some athletes will access this service through a range of providers (e.g. Regional Programmes, Glasgow School of Sport, Scottish Institute of Sport etc). Other sessions will be delivered weekly by the coaching team.

National Performance

Swimmers in Senior Performance will typically be aged between 14-18 years old (again exceptions may exist) and provided with 9 x 2 hour weekly pool sessions, plus land training as required. Achieving success at Scottish and British national events is the target and the expected goal of all swimmers in the group. Some swimmers in the squad will be targeting junior international selection.

Kit Required: cap, goggles, kick-board, pull-buoy, hand paddles, ankle band, fins, snorkel, water bottle.

High Performance

Elite Performance athletes will typically be of university age although some may be younger or older than this. They receive a core programme of 9 x 2 hour weekly pool sessions, plus 2-3 land training sessions. To assist with academic commitments the training programme has flexibility that allows access to 2 additional pool sessions and later or earlier start times where needed. All Elite squad swimmers will be expected to deliver quality performances at the senior/open Scottish and British national events, with some working at or aspiring to be international standard.

Kit Required: cap, goggles, kick-board, pull-buoy, large and small hand paddles, ankle band, fins, snorkel, water bottle.

Youth Squad and Masters Swimming

This section of the Club welcomes swimmers who cannot commit to the formal expected criteria of the other groups but still have the desire to train for fitness and/or competitive events. The two groups at this level are led by a dedicated coach whom is responsible for delivering the appropriate skills and fitness routines for these athletes.

Youth Squad

Youth squad operates two evenings per week at Tollcross and is aimed at swimmers who wish to stay in the sport but are no longer willing or able to maintain the commitment or standards required for the mainstream competitive squads. Each session lasts 60 minutes each and is targeted at developing the aerobic fitness level and technical skills/strokes of each athlete. Members of this squad can choose to opt in or out of competitive events. If the swimmer meets the qualification standards for a competition they will receive an entry form as normal.

Masters Squad

Masters squad training is the natural progression for older athletes who wish to remain in the sport but cannot make the commitment required for the Performance groups. The squad normally provides up to four sessions per week with both technical development and improving fitness at the heart of the programme. Attendance requirements are flexible based on swimmer need and work/academic commitments. Like Youth Squad, participation in competitions (both mainstream and Masters specific) is optional.