

## The Importance of Swimming Squad Criteria

### Ensuring Growth, Fairness, and Progression in Competitive Swimming

A well-defined swimming squad criteria is essential for fostering both individual and collective success within a club. By establishing clear guidelines on entry, competition participation, and training attendance, the squad ensures that swimmers are grouped according to their age, ability, and commitment. This structure not only promotes fairness and safety but also maximises each swimmer's potential by providing suitable challenges and support. Criteria for attendance and punctuality instil discipline, while competition guidelines allow swimmers to set personal goals and track their progress. Ultimately, these standards create an environment where athletes can thrive, learn valuable life skills, and enjoy their swimming journey.

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## Junior & Senior Club Squad Criteria

### 1. Squad Entry Criteria

- **Age Range** Junor Club: 12 – 16 years & Senior Club: 16 years & over.
- **Qualification** Coaches recommendation, Swimmer / Parent request & assessments.
- **Entry Via** Any squads (age & spaces permitting).

### 2. Competition Criteria

- **Attendance** Competitions are optional for swimmers within Junior Club & Senior Club.

### 3. Training Commitment and Attendance Criteria

- **Attendance** 2-3 pool sessions per week.
- **Punctuality** Swimmers must arrive 5 minutes before the session starts (pool or land).

**Please note** Swimmers must consistently demonstrate respect and encouragement both in and out of the pool. All are expected to foster a positive squad environment through good sportsmanship, cooperation, clear communication, and an inclusive attitude to building a strong, unified team.

**Important** If a swimmer does not meet the criteria for a squad, they may be placed in a different group that better matches their level of commitment. Head Coaches, after consulting with other coaches, may approve squad changes outside standard entry criteria to manage numbers and offer more swimmer opportunities. Movement is prioritised by full qualification, partial qualification, and current performance, training, commitment, attendance, and attitude. If squads are full, Head Coaches will decide allocations regardless of qualifying times.

## All Development Squads

(Ayr Development, Prestwick Development, Troon Development, Maybole Development)

### 1. Squad Entry Criteria

- **Age Range** 12 years and under.
- **Qualification** Coaches recommendation with considerations of ability, commitment & attitude.
- **Entry Via** Transition Squads or through club assessments.

### 2. Competition Criteria

- **Attendance** Swimmers are expected to attend SAST Time Trials and internal competitions which lead into local competitions to gain experience.
- **Target Comps** SAST Time Trials, Internal events, SAST Meets & Graded Competitions.

### 3. Training Commitment and Attendance Criteria

- **Attendance** 2-3 pool sessions per week.  
Attend SAST Swim Clinics (3-4 times a year).  
Attend the Friday morning session to build the habit and gain experience.
- **Punctuality** Swimmers must arrive 5 minutes before the session starts (pool or land).

**Please note** Swimmers must consistently demonstrate respect and encouragement both in and out of the pool. All are expected to foster a positive squad environment through good sportsmanship, cooperation, clear communication, and an inclusive attitude to building a strong, unified team.

**Important** If a swimmer does not meet the criteria for a squad, they may be placed in a different group that better matches their level of commitment. Head Coaches, after consulting with other coaches, may approve squad changes outside standard entry criteria to manage numbers and offer more swimmer opportunities. Movement is prioritised by full qualification, partial qualification, and current performance, training, commitment, attendance, and attitude. If squads are full, Head Coaches will decide allocations regardless of qualifying times.

## Junior Competition Squad

### 1. Squad Entry Criteria

- **Age Range** 12 years and under.
- **Qualification** Coaches recommendation with considerations of ability, commitment & attitude.
- **Entry Via** Development Squads.
- **Commitment** Swimmers must have previously.
  - Attended 2-3 sessions regularly.
  - Attended the Friday morning session regularly.
  - Attended SAST Time Trials regularly and experienced competitions.

### 2. Competition Criteria

- **Attendance** Approximately 12 competitions including SAST Time Trials.
- **Target Comps** Open Meets, Graded Meets, SAST Meets, Club Champs & SAST Time Trials.

### 3. Training Commitment and Attendance Criteria

- **Attendance** 3-4 pool sessions per week.  
Wednesday morning training is compulsory.
- **Punctuality** Swimmers must arrive 5 minutes before the session starts (pool or land).

**Please note** Swimmers must consistently demonstrate respect and encouragement both in and out of the pool. All are expected to foster a positive squad environment through good sportsmanship, cooperation, clear communication, and an inclusive attitude to building a strong, unified team.

**Important** If a swimmer does not meet the criteria for a squad, they may be placed in a different group that better matches their level of commitment. Head Coaches, after consulting with other coaches, may approve squad changes outside standard entry criteria to manage numbers and offer more swimmer opportunities. Movement is prioritised by full qualification, partial qualification, and current performance, training, commitment, attendance, and attitude. If squads are full, Head Coaches will decide allocations regardless of qualifying times.

## District Development Squad

(Previously Youth Competition 2)

### 1. Squad Entry Criteria

- **Age Range** 14 years and under.
- **Qualification** Coaches recommendation with considerations of ability, commitment & attitude.
- **Entry Via** Junior Competition.
- **Commitment** Swimmers must have previously.
  - Attended 3 sessions regularly.
  - Attended a minimum of 1 morning session weekly.
  - Attended competitions and SAST Time Trials regularly.

### 2. Competition Criteria

- **Attendance** Approximately 12 competitions a year (1 or 2 day meets)
- **Target Comps** West District Champs, Open Meets, Graded Meets, SAST Meets & Club Champs

### 3. Training Commitment and Attendance Criteria

- **Attendance** 4-5 pool sessions per week.  
Land Training or being active in other sports weekly.  
All morning sessions are compulsory.
- **Punctuality** Swimmers must arrive 5 minutes before the session starts (pool or land).

**Please note** Swimmers must consistently demonstrate respect and encouragement both in and out of the pool. All are expected to foster a positive squad environment through good sportsmanship, cooperation, clear communication, and an inclusive attitude to building a strong, unified team.

**Important** If a swimmer does not meet the criteria for a squad, they may be placed in a different group that better matches their level of commitment. Head Coaches, after consulting with other coaches, may approve squad changes outside standard entry criteria to manage numbers and offer more swimmer opportunities. Movement is prioritised by full qualification, partial qualification, and current performance, training, commitment, attendance, and attitude. If squads are full, Head Coaches will decide allocations regardless of qualifying times.

## Scottish Development Squad 2

(Previously Youth Competition 1)

### 1. Squad Entry Criteria

- **Age Range** 14 years and under.
- **Qualification** 3 SAST Squad Qualifying Times.  
1 & 2 times can be considered (numbers / spaces permitting).  
Coaches' recommendations can be considered (numbers / spaces permitting).
- **Entry Via** District Development Squad.
- **Commitment** Swimmers must have previously attended 4 sessions regularly.

### 2. Competition Criteria

- **Focus Comps** Scottish National Age Groups & Scottish Summer Meet.
- **Target Comps** West District Champs, Open Meets, Graded Meets, SAST Meets & Club Champs
- **Attendance** Approximately 12 competitions a year (2 or more days at each competition).
- **Please note:** The Scottish National Age Group Champs and Scottish Summer Meet are the primary target competitions for the season which swimmers must compete at if qualified. Training efforts will be specifically directed towards these events. Swimmers are strongly advised to avoid taking holidays during the six weeks leading up to the competition.

### 3. Training Commitment and Attendance Criteria

- **Attendance** 5-6 pool sessions per week as agreed with the coach.  
Land Training (compulsory when available)  
Attend a minimum of 2 morning sessions weekly.
- **Punctuality** Swimmers must arrive 5 minutes before the session starts (pool or land).

**Please note** Swimmers must consistently demonstrate respect and encouragement both in and out of the pool. All are expected to foster a positive squad environment through good sportsmanship, cooperation, clear communication, and an inclusive attitude to building a strong, unified team.

**Important** If a swimmer does not meet the criteria for a squad, they may be placed in a different group that better matches their level of commitment. Head Coaches, after consulting with other coaches, may approve squad changes outside standard entry criteria to manage numbers and offer more swimmer opportunities. Movement is prioritised by full qualification, partial qualification, and current performance, training, commitment, attendance, and attitude. If squads are full, Head Coaches will decide allocations regardless of qualifying times.

## Scottish Development Squad 1

(Previously Senior Performance 2)

### 1. Squad Entry Criteria

- **Age Range** 13 years and over.
- **Qualification** 3 SAST Squad Qualifying Times.  
1 & 2 times can be considered (numbers / spaces permitting).  
Coaches' recommendations can be considered (numbers / spaces permitting).
- **Entry Via** District Development, Scottish Development 2 & British Development Squads .
- **Commitment** Swimmers must have previously attended 5 sessions regularly.

### 2. Squad Competition Criteria

- **Focus Comps** Scottish National Age Groups & Scottish Summer Meet.
- **Target Comps** West District Champs, Open Meets, Graded Meets, SAST Meets & Club Champs
- **Attendance** Approximately 12 competitions a year (2 or more days at each competition).
- **Please note:** The Scottish National Age Group Champs and Scottish Summer Meet are the primary target competitions for the season which swimmers must compete at if qualified. Training efforts will be specifically directed towards these events. Swimmers are strongly advised to avoid taking holidays during the six weeks leading up to the competition.

### 3. Squad Training Commitment and Attendance Criteria

- **Attendance**

14 yrs & under	5-7 Pool Sessions + Land Training.
15yrs & Older	6-7 Pool sessions + Land Training.

Land Training will be compulsory for all swimmers (Thursday or Friday am TBC)
- **Punctuality** Swimmers must arrive 5 minutes before the session starts (pool or land).
- **Exam Training** 4th Year (and above) swimmers are advised to continue training before exams and attend at least 5 sessions each week. Swimmers should avoid training sessions on the evening prior and morning of exams. Any further absences from training should be discussed in advance.

### 4. Performance Athletes

- Swimmers are expected to lead a performance athlete lifestyle with committed & disciplined routines, balancing intensive training with recovery, and prioritising nutrition and sleep. Athletes must manage their time efficiently and adapt their schedules to accommodate training, competitions and academic responsibilities. This dedication builds resilience and ensures sustained progress toward peak performance.

**Important** If a swimmer does not meet the criteria for a squad, they may be placed in a different group that better matches their level of commitment. Head Coaches, after consulting with other coaches, may approve squad changes outside standard entry criteria to manage numbers and offer more swimmer opportunities. Movement is prioritised by full qualification, partial qualification, and current performance, training, commitment, attendance, and attitude. If squads are full, Head Coaches will decide allocations regardless of qualifying times.



## British Development Squad

(Previously Senior Performance 1)

### 1. Squad Entry Criteria

- **Age Range** 13 years and over.
- **Qualification** 3 SAST Squad Qualifying Times (1 & 2 times can be considered).
- **Entry Via** Scottish Development Squad 1 & Scottish Development Squad 2.
- **Commitment** Swimmers must have previously attended 6 sessions regularly.

### 2. Squad Competition Criteria

- **Attendance** Approximately 12 competitions a year (2 or more days at each competition).
- **Focus Comps** - April, SNAGS and/or British Open Champs (Trials)  
- July, Scottish Summer and/or GB Aquatics Next Gen  
- Scottish / British Squad selections for international competition.
- **Please note:** Participation in focus competitions is mandatory. Swimmers are not permitted to take holidays of four days or longer within six weeks prior to these competitions. Those who do so will be assigned to the Scottish Development Squad for that specific training cycle, enabling the British Development Squad to maintain shared consistent training objectives.

### 3. Squad Training Commitment and Attendance Criteria

- **Attendance** Swimmers are to attend sessions as directed by the coach. Required sessions may change weekly based on training focus, competitions, and individual needs. A weekly plan detailing session attendance is provided to swimmers prior to each week.
- **Progression** The following is a guide and example to demonstrate progression.

Squad Stage	Target Age	Season or Year	Weekly Sessions	Session Guide	Progression Notes
1	13-14 yrs	1 <sup>st</sup>	7	6 pool + 1 land	Some flexibility in which pool sessions to attend when agreed.
2	14-15 yrs	2 <sup>nd</sup>	7-8	7 pool + 1 land	
3	15-16 yrs	3 <sup>rd</sup>	8-9	8 pool + 1 land	Progression into Strength and Conditioning (S&C) as required.
4	16 yrs+	4 <sup>th</sup>	9-10	8 pool + 2 land	

- **Punctuality** Swimmers must arrive 5 minutes before the session starts (pool or land).
- **Exam Training** 4th Year (and above) swimmers are advised to continue training throughout exams and attend at least 7 sessions each week. Swimmers can avoid training sessions on the evening prior and morning of exams. Any further absences should be discussed in advance.

### 4. Performance Athletes

- Swimmers are expected to lead a performance athlete lifestyle with committed & disciplined routines, balancing intensive training with recovery, and prioritising nutrition and sleep. Athletes must manage their time efficiently and adapt their schedules to accommodate training, competitions and academic responsibilities. This dedication builds resilience and ensures sustained progress toward peak performance.