



**WORLD  
AQUATICS**

# **TECHNICAL OFFICIALS PATHWAY & APPOINTMENTS RULES**

**ARTISTIC SWIMMING**

**In force as from 1 January 2025**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER A – BACKGROUND.....	3
CHAPTER B – TECHNICAL OFFICIALS.....	4
CHAPTER C – TECHNICAL OFFICIALS' EXPENSES.....	5
CHAPTER D – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	6
REFEREES AND OFFICIALS COMMITTEE.....	6
TECHNICAL SPORTS COMMITTEE .....	6
WORLD AQUATICS MANAGEMENT .....	6
CHAPTER E – OFFICIALS' PROGRAMME.....	7
BRONZE LEVEL .....	7
SILVER LEVEL.....	9
GOLD LEVEL.....	11
CHAPTER F – OFFICIALS TRANSITIONING.....	12
CHAPTER G – WORLD AQUATICS COMPETITIONS.....	14
CHAPTER H – APPOINTMENT POLICY .....	15

## CHAPTER A – BACKGROUND

According to the Rights and Duties of the Bureau under the World Aquatics Constitution (Article 17.1, p), followed by World Aquatics By-Laws (Article 6.5), the World Aquatics Bureau has established the World Aquatics Referees and Officials Committee ('ROC') for each World Aquatics sport on 17 October 2023 in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The establishment of such Committees should further enhance the integrity of each sport and ensure an efficient and reliable Officiating system in Aquatic sports.

Each World Aquatics sport has its own Referees and Officials Committee (except for High Diving, which is to be established at a later stage). Each Committee is represented by three (3) members of which one is the Committee Chairperson.

The new World Aquatics International Technical Officials System is a comprehensive, revamped framework designed to enhance the competency and professionalism of Technical Officials in aquatic sports. Built around three core components—education, experience, and evaluation—this system ensures a holistic approach to skill development and performance assessment. It introduces a tiered structure with Bronze, Silver, and Gold levels, each representing a progressive standard of competency. These levels serve as benchmarks to assess and validate the capabilities of technical officials, enabling precise and merit-based appointments to World Aquatics events. This modernized system aims to foster excellence, consistency, and transparency, elevating the standards of officiating across all six aquatic sports.

## CHAPTER B – TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

Technical Officials must be on the current World Aquatics Officials Programme approved by the respective Technical Sports Committee for the Aquatics sport in order to officiate at Olympic Games, World Aquatics Championships or World Aquatics Competitions. Nominated officials must be members of the nominating Federation and certified by the Member Federation in submitting their nomination (World Aquatics Competition Regulations, Part One, Article 11.3)

As per the rules, the maximum age of Technical Officials when officiating at World Aquatics events, except Water Polo, shall be sixty-five (65) years as of 31st December in the year of competition. For Water Polo, the age limit shall be sixty (60) years during the year of competition.

All International Technical Officials must be on the World Aquatics Officials Programme whilst National Technical Officials must be approved by the Member Federation in which country the event takes place.

World Aquatics differentiates the different roles of Technical Officials in its competitions as follows:

### **International Officials:**

Referee, Assistant Referee, Difficulty Technical Controller, Assistant Difficulty Technical Controllers, Synchronisation Technical Controller, Judges, Evaluators, Music Manager.

### **National Technical Officials:**

Lead Secretariat: Coordinate the work between NTO and Technical Committee, ensure deadlines are respected and documents distributed. Double check of entry lists, collaborating with the referee as needed.

Assistant Secretariat / Runner: help overseeing all NTO, contact person between the NTO and the Technical Committee.

Assistants: preparation of clipboards. Liaison with the delegations, help with medal ceremonies; Timers (2)

**Evaluator** – Official appointed by World Aquatics to undertake Judges' evaluations.

## CHAPTER C – TECHNICAL OFFICIALS’ EXPENSES

There are several financial aspects to be considered for Officials' education, certification and appointments.

All Official's Education and Certification opportunities costs (courses associated fees, course expenses such as travel, accommodation, transportation, meals) sit with the Technical Official candidate and/or his/her National Federation.

Once appointed for the World Aquatics Event (Tier 1 and Tier 2) the expenses are covered as follows for all International Technical Officials for Artistic Swimming\*:

Expense type	Tier 1		Tier 2	
	Olympic Games	World Aquatics Championships/	World Aquatics Junior and Youth Championships	World Aquatics World Cup
<b>Travel</b> (economy airfare, train fare, bus fare, by car)	Organising Committee	National Federation	National Federation	National Federation
<b>Visa</b> (and visa fee associated costs)	Organising Committee	National Federation	National Federation	National Federation
<b>Accommodation</b> (minimum European three stars hotel)	Organising Committee	Organising Committee	National Federation	National Federation
<b>Ground Transportation</b>	Organising Committee	Organising Committee	Organising Committee	Organising Committee
<b>Meals</b> (full board)	Organising Committee	Organising Committee	National Federation	National Federation
<b>Per Diem</b> (as per World Aquatics Per Diem policy**)	Organising Committee	World Aquatics	World Aquatics	n/a
<b>Health Insurance</b>	Organising Committee	World Aquatics	World Aquatics	World Aquatics
<b>Uniforms</b> ***	Organising Committee	Organising Committee	Organising Committee	Organising Committee

\* Unless it is stipulated differently in the Hosting Agreement between World Aquatics and the Organising Committee

\*\* May differ for the Olympic Games

\*\*\* Unless differently stipulated by World Aquatics

For National Technical Officials all expenses shall be covered by the Organising Committee or National Federation.

## CHAPTER D – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **REFEREES AND OFFICIALS COMMITTEE**

The Referees and Officials Committee's responsibilities, per Sport, shall be as follows:

1. to propose rosters for Officials -if required-, subject to the approval of the Bureau for all World Aquatics Events based on the lists of eligible Officials as well as the minimum required number and level-qualified Officials per event Tier;
2. according to the feedback and evaluations from the relevant Technical Sports Committee –if required- to appoint the necessary Officials on a daily basis or to amend appointments during competitions; and
3. to provide any other professional activity as deemed necessary by World Aquatics.

The Referees and Officials Committee shall work in synergy with each Technical Sport Committee, World Aquatics Sports and Development Departments.

### **TECHNICAL SPORTS COMMITTEE**

Throughout the technical aspects of the sport, each Technical Sport Committee's role is to support the World Aquatics in creating and delivering Officials' Education and Certification opportunities, evaluation and monitoring. In addition to this, the Technical Sports Committee shall work closely with the Referees and Officials Committee and World Aquatics Management team, ensuring an efficient and successful Officiating Programme at all World Aquatics Events.

### **WORLD AQUATICS MANAGEMENT**

World Aquatics Management must work closely with the Technical Sports Committee and Referees and Officials Committee while ensuring that the Officials' database remains up to date. In addition, it must maintain collaborative communication regarding the appointments with the National Federations and Organising Committees.

World Aquatics shall oversee the work of the Referees and Officials Committee.

To enable a smooth and efficient working approach World Aquatics Management has introduced a new Officials' Programme (more information is provided in Chapter E).

## CHAPTER E – OFFICIALS’ PROGRAMME

World Aquatics has put in place a new Officials’ Programme that identifies all International Technical Officials within three different Officials’ Levels and enables the Referees and Officials Committee to achieve their duty as an appointment body. The system is defined by three Officials’ levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold.

Besides, World Aquatics reserves the right to promote or demote officials upon recommendation from the Technical Committee.

The pathway to becoming a World Aquatics International Technical Official is outlined below.

### BRONZE LEVEL

#### PATHWAY TO ENTER BRONZE LEVEL

##### CANDIDATES’ PROFILE

Officials must have:

- Good knowledge of the Rules;
- Experience in officiating at **Tier 5** competitions;
- Ethical, physical and mental readiness; and
- Recognised and/or in good standing with their National Federation

##### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA TO ENTER BRONZE LEVEL

1. Age: Min 18, Max 55
2. Proof of experience: at least 5 competitions of minimum Tier 5 competitions in their career.
3. Each competition should have at least 40 athletes participating. Applicants must share their results sheets from each competition (The competitions may be Senior, Junior or Age Group. Masters competitions are not considered).
4. English language Certificate (intermediate level B1/B2)
5. Application submitted by the National Federation for the candidate to take the Bronze level e-learning course.
6. Completed the Bronze level e-learning course within one year on the World Aquatics learning platform, concluded by a successful online assessment.

#### REQUIREMENTS TO MAINTAIN BRONZE LEVEL

##### EDUCATION

- Annual Online Exam: Open for one month on the World Aquatics Learning Platform. Must be completed in a single attempt with Bronze passing grade of 80%.
- Online sessions: Participate in online sessions on Rules changes or other specific topics.

##### EXPERIENCE

- Within a period of 2 years: Officiate at minimum of 2 Tier 3, 4 and/or 5 events.
- There should be a minimum of 40 athletes participating. Competitions may be Senior, Junior or Age Group. Masters competitions will not be accepted.

PRACTICAL EVALUATION		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get one (1) evaluation per year with a minimum score of 75%, bias of N/3.</li> <li>• Evaluations must be done by a World Aquatics Evaluator.</li> </ul>		
Next: Option 1	Next: Option 2	
They don't meet the requirements of Bronze level	They meet the requirements of Bronze level	
<p>They are excluded from Bronze level.</p> <p>In order to re-enter Bronze level, they need to meet the eligibility criteria for Bronze level.</p>	<p>They will be considered to move to Silver if they have stayed in Bronze for a period of 4 years. This period can be shortened if 2 evaluations have happened within 2 consecutive years. If both evaluations happen on their first year, the second year still needs to be completed.</p>	<p>They intend to remain in Bronze level.</p>

## SILVER LEVEL

### PATHWAY TO ENTER SILVER LEVEL

Over 4 years

#### CANDIDATES' PROFILE

Officials must have:

- Very good knowledge of the rules;
- A very good level of English language; and
- Experience in officiating at **Tier 3, 4, 5** competitions Each competition must have a minimum of 40 athletes participating. Applicants must share their results sheets.

#### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA TO ENTER SILVER LEVEL

1. Age: Min 18, Max 65
2. Successfully completed **4 years in Bronze level** (education, experience and evaluations)
3. Application submitted by the National Federation for the candidate to attend the Silver level in-person course.
4. Completed the Silver level in-person course, including classroom and practical sessions at a competition, concluded by a successful assessment and practical evaluation.

### REQUIREMENTS TO MAINTAIN SILVER LEVEL

Over 4 years

#### EDUCATION

- Annual Online Exam: Open for one month on the World Aquatics Learning Platform. Must be completed in a single attempt with Silver passing grade.
- Online sessions: Participate in online sessions on Rules changes or other specific topics.
- Mentorship opportunities will be available for further development.

#### EXPERIENCE

- Officiate at: one to two Tier 2 and/or 3 competitions per year, demonstrating leadership and involvement within own Federation.

#### PRACTICAL EVALUATION

- Get one (1) evaluation per year with a minimum score of 80%, bias of N/3.
- Evaluations should be done by a World Aquatics Evaluator.

**Next: Option 1**

**Next: Option 2**

<p><b>They don't meet the requirements of Silver level</b></p>	<p><b>They meet the requirements of Silver level</b></p>	
<p>They are excluded from Silver level and go back to Bronze level.</p> <p>In order to re-enter Silver level, they need to meet the eligibility criteria of Silver level.</p>	<p>They decide to be a candidate for Gold level.</p>	<p>They intend to remain in Silver level.</p>

## GOLD LEVEL

### PATHWAY TO ENTER GOLD LEVEL

Over 4 years

#### CANDIDATES' PROFILE

Officials must have:

- Exceptional knowledge of the rules
- Strong experience in officiating at **Tier 1 and 2** competitions
- No bias or ethical complaints against the judge.

#### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA TO ENTER GOLD LEVEL

1. Age: Min 18, Max 65
2. Successfully completed **4 years in Silver** (education, experience and evaluations)
5. Application submitted by the National Federation for the candidate to attend the Gold level course (webinar or in-person course).
3. Completed the Gold level course (webinar or in-person course), concluded by a successful assessment.

#### REQUIREMENTS TO MAINTAIN GOLD LEVEL

Over 4 years

#### EDUCATION

- Annual Online Exam: Open for one month on the World Aquatics Learning Platform. Must be completed in a single attempt with Gold passing grade.
- Online sessions: Participate in online sessions on Rules changes or other specific topics
- Knowledge sharing: Gold Officials to mentor and share their expertise with Silver Officials.

#### EXPERIENCE

- Officiate at one (1) Tier 1, 2 and/or 3 competitions per year.

#### PRACTICAL EVALUATION

- Get one (1) evaluation per year with a minimum score of 85%, a bias of N/3.

Next: Option 1	Next Option 2
<b>They don't meet the requirements of Gold level</b>	<b>They meet the requirements of Gold Level</b>
They are excluded from the Gold level and go back to the Silver level.  In order to re-enter in Gold level, they need to meet the eligibility criteria for the Gold level.	They intend to remain in Gold.

## CHAPTER F – OFFICIALS TRANSITION PHASE

To ensure consistency in officiating World Aquatics will determine the transitioning process for the existing pool of International Technical Officials, based on several criteria, using the Bronze, Silver, and Gold system.

The criteria will include current Officials' **certification, evaluation, and experience** officiating at World Aquatics Events.

The following tables outline the criteria for each Aquatics Sport:

### JUDGES:

<b>ARTISTIC SWIMMING</b>	<b>Bronze</b>	<b>Silver</b>	<b>Gold</b>
<b>Certification</b>	Passed the 2024 online exam (80%)	Passed the 2024 online exam (85%)	Passed the 2024 online exam (85%)
<b>Evaluation</b>	One evaluation per year from 2023 and 2024 with a minimum of 75%, bias 3.	One evaluation per year from 2023 and 2024 with a minimum of 80%, bias 3.	One evaluation per year from 2023 and 2024 with a minimum of 85%, bias 3.
<b>Experience</b>	Officiating at one National or Continental Competition if no attendance at World Aquatics competitions. Multiple attendance at World Aquatics competitions (minimum 2 competitions) will be considered in lieu of National or Continental competitions.	Officiating at one National or Continental Competition if no attendance at World Aquatics competitions. Multiple attendance at World Aquatics competitions (minimum 2 competitions) will be considered in lieu of National or Continental competitions.	Officiating at one National or Continental Competition if no attendance at World Aquatics competitions. Multiple attendance at World Aquatics competitions (minimum 2 competitions) will be considered in lieu of National or Continental competitions.

Current A judges that only have one evaluation over the two years will be placed in Bronze level.

Judges that do not have any evaluations for either 2023 or 2024 but have at least two evaluations over 75% in one of the years will be placed in the Bronze or the Silver category in accordance with the level of the evaluations.

**TECHNICAL CONTROLLERS:**

<b>ARTISTIC SWIMMING</b>	<b>Bronze</b>	<b>Silver</b>	<b>Gold</b>
<b>Certification</b>	Passed the 2024 online exam	Passed the 2024 online exam	Passed the 2024 online exam
<b>Experience</b>	Having completed the online training.	Having officiated in one of the World Aquatics World Cups or Junior World Championships	Having officiated in the World Aquatics Championships or the Paris Olympic Games

Any official listed on the World Aquatics website will be allowed a case-by-case review of their status according to their experience and personal investment in World Aquatics competitions should they deem it necessary.

## CHAPTER G – WORLD AQUATICS COMPETITIONS

World Aquatics defines five (5) different Tiers of International Competitions as per World Aquatics Competition Regulations, Part One, Article 2.2.1. For the World Aquatics Officials Appointments, the Competitions of relevance are:

**Tier 1.** Major Aquatics Competitions - the Olympic Games, World Aquatics Championships, World Aquatics Swimming Championships (25m), and

**Tier 2.** Other World Aquatics Competitions - World Junior and Youth Championships in each sport, World Cups, World Leagues, and other World Aquatics competitions.

The following Table outlines the number of events per each Tier, for every World Aquatics sport (per single calendar year and one Olympic cycle):

SPORT	Tier 1		Tier 2		Total	
	Per Calendar Year	Per Olympic Cycle	Per Calendar Year	Per Olympic Cycle	Per Calendar Year	Per Olympic Cycle
ARTISTIC SWIMMING	1	3	1	25		28

The following tables outline the number of International (ITOs) and National Technical Officials (NTOs) required for each sports event:

Artistic Swimming	Event	# ITOs	# NTOs
Tier 1	Olympic Games	16	7-8
	World Championships	20-26	7-8
Tier 2	World Cup	20-26	7-8
	World Junior Championships	20-26	7-8
	World Youth Championships	20-26	7-8

*The above numbers include reserves for rotation purposes and the ability to replace a judge/TC when needed. The principle of neutrality should be applied whenever possible.*

Table below outlines the ratio of **Gold**, **Silver** and **Bronze** levels of International Technical Officials (ITOs) at the following event Tiers:

ARTISTIC SWIMMING								
Tier	% Bronze	# Bronze	% Silver	# Silver	% Gold	# Gold	% total	# total
Tier 1			20	4	80	12	100	16
Tier 2*	20	3	30	5	50	8	100	16

*\*Subject to NFs nominations, reviewed and approved by World Aquatics.*

*These numbers include a maximum of 10 judges and 6 technical controllers.  
For TC: 4 gold and 2 silver in Tier 1 competitions  
For TC: 3 gold, 2 silver and 1 bronze in Tier 2 competitions*

## CHAPTER H – APPOINTMENT POLICY

World Aquatics Officials and Referees Committee shall be the only body that has the mandate to recommend and appoint International Officials for all World Aquatics Events, subject to World Aquatics Bureau approval.

The Officials and Referees Committee should proceed to Officials appointments (referees, judges, starters, technical controllers, etc.) for all World Aquatics Events as soon as the World Aquatics Event Calendar is released. In principle, the appointments should take place no later than six (6) months before the commencement of the sports event.

The following shall be taken into consideration when making the Officials appointments:

1. Tier level of the event;
2. Required percentage for appointment of Bronze, Silver, and Gold level Officials;
3. Officials' education, certification, evaluation and experience;
4. Continental/Regional representation;
5. Gender representation;
6. Appointed Referee may be a member of the respective Sport Technical Committee to ensure the necessary experience required to uphold such duty.
7. Officials' development opportunities;
8. Available support through National Programmes;
9. Perceived or actual conflict of interest.

Once the appointments are made, and upheld by the World Aquatics Bureau, the World Aquatics Management Team shall communicate appointments to the relevant Officials, National Federations and Organising committee/s.