

# Your guide to becoming a swimming official

The Swimming Officials Pathway

SWIM IRELAND

**SWIM  
IRELAND**

Clubs and  
Community



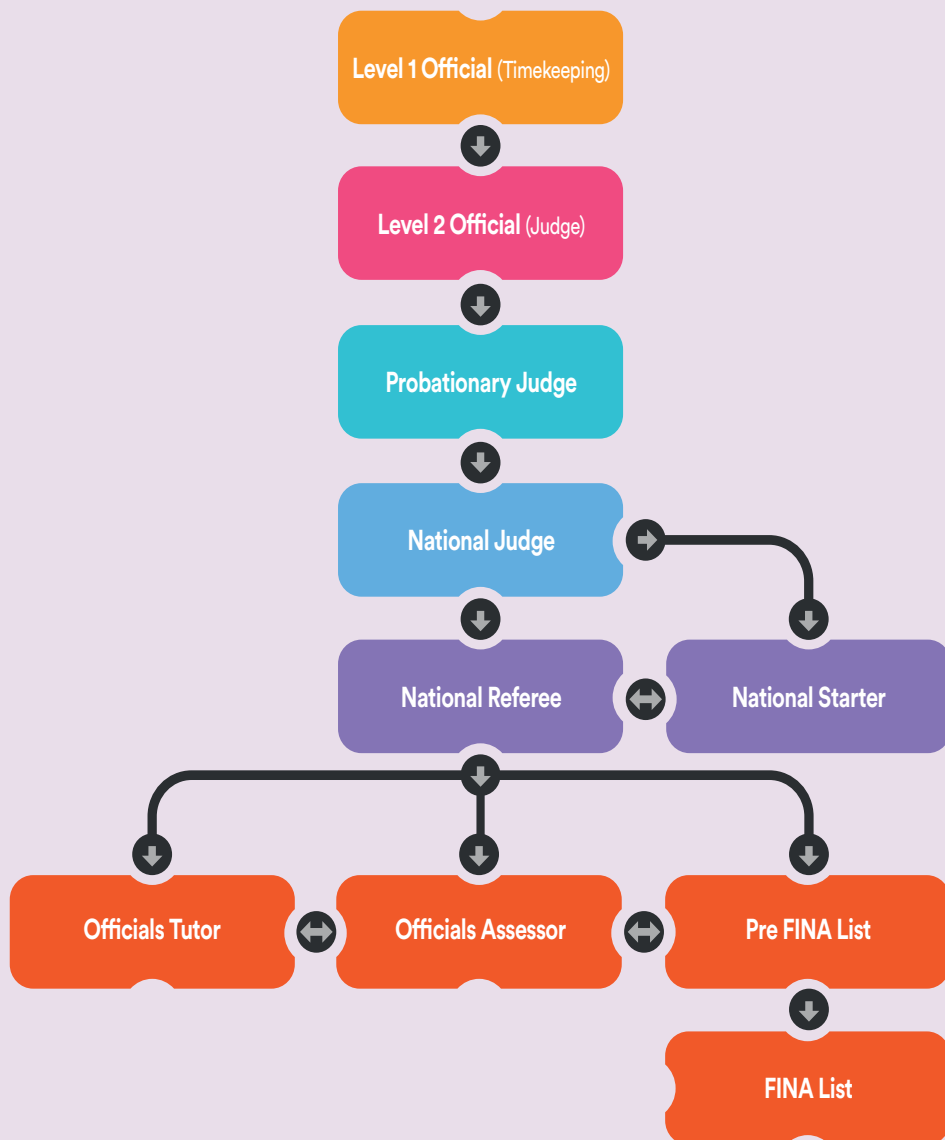
# Introduction

All sporting organisations rely on volunteer officials to run the competitive element of the sport. This is especially true in swimming where each National level meet requires a minimum of 40 officials on deck to run. The National Officials Committee is responsible for developing new officials and enhancing the competencies of existing ones. The Committee has developed a clearly laid out education pathway designed to create a uniform pattern of interpretation of the International (FINA) Rules, ensuring that they are applied in a fair and consistent manner. This booklet gives an overview of the pathway and sets out the requirements at each level.

In order to progress from one level to the next, you must be assessed as competent at the previous level. You can go as far as you want or remain at whatever level you are comfortable with. The pathway is designed to provide sufficient time in training to ensure familiarity with all levels of competition and there is no substitute for on deck experience. We have a host of experienced and enthusiastic officials who are willing to act as mentors and you will learn a lot by working alongside them. The best learning opportunities often occur on poolside.

So how do you become an official? By reading this booklet you have taken the first step. Parents often become involved with a view to better understanding the rules or to help out with the club. Whatever the motivation and no matter how far you want to progress along the pathway, we will help you. Officiating is not always easy, but it is very rewarding, and you will be joining a great team of people who have dedicated their time to enhancing our sport. If you are interested in knowing more, why not have a chat with one of our officials at your next event or contact our Competitions Officer, Pat Daly @ [patdaly@swimireland.ie](mailto:patdaly@swimireland.ie)

# The Swimming Officials Pathway



\*More information explaining requirements on each role is provided within this document

## Level 1 Swimming Official (Timekeeper)

### Who can become a Level 1 Official?

Anyone wanting to operate as a timekeeper at any level of competition and/or start their journey along the official's pathway.

### Requirements

► Completion of Level 1 Officials Course (Introduction to officiating)

### What am I qualified to do now?

Fulfill the role of timekeeper at club, regional and national competitions.

### Level 1 Official Course (Introduction to officiating)

The Level 1 Official course is an introduction to officiating and will give an understanding of the Swim Ireland Officials structure. It is a 1-and-a-half-hour face to face course providing theory and practical elements. It provides an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Timekeepers, the associated operating procedures and covers FINA Rule SW 2.9 along with other duties for working at swimming competitions.



## Level 2 Swimming Official (Stroke & Turn Judge)

### Who can become a Level 2 Official?

Anyone wanting to operate as a judge at club, regional and national levels of competition and/or continue their journey along the officials pathway.

### Requirements

- Completion of Level 1 Officials Course (Timekeeper)
- Completion of Level 2 Officials Course (Judge)

### What am I qualified to do now?

Fulfill the role of timekeeper and judge (turn and stroke) at club, regional and national competitions.

### Level 2 Official Course (Judge)

The Level 2 officials course is the next step and is to understand the rules and responsibilities of the judge (stroke and turn). It is a 5-hour face to face course providing theory, practical and observation elements. The course covers FINA Rules SW 2.6 & 2.7 relating to the Inspector of turns and Judges of Strokes respectively. Each of the strokes- Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle and Medley swimming is covered in detail, along with the reporting of stroke violations to the Referee.



## Probationary Judge (Licensed)

### Who can become a Probationary Judge?

Anyone who has completed a Level 1 and 2 officials course and has gained on deck experience acting as an official and now wants to expand their knowledge and/or continue their journey along the officials pathway.

### Requirements

- ▶ Completion of Level 1 Officials Course (Timekeeper)
- ▶ Completion of Level 2 Officials Course (Judge)
- ▶ Experience of acting as a judge
- ▶ Satisfactory attended and passed officials school
- ▶ Vetting
- ▶ Safeguarding
- ▶ Club Membership

### What am I qualified to do now?

Fulfill the role of a named official at club, regional and national competitions.

### Officials School

The purpose of the officials school is to further expand on the level 2 officials course and use the experience that attendees have gained. The school will give a deeper understanding of the rules and responsibilities of the judge (stroke and turn) in more detail. It is a 2- day face to face course providing theory, practical and observation elements. There is a theory examination at the end of the course which attendees must receive a satisfactory pass mark. The course covers in greater detail FINA Rules SW 2.6 & 2.7 relating to the Inspector of turns and Judges of Strokes respectively. Each of the strokes- Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle and Medley swimming is covered in detail, along with the reporting of stroke violations to the Referee. It also covers the role of the referee, starter, technical delegate & recorder & how to deal with a protest.



# National Judge

## Who can become a National Judge?

A Probationary Judge who has gained on deck experience acting as an official and now wants to operate as a fully licensed official at club, regional and national levels of competition, further expand their knowledge and/or continue their journey along the officials pathway.

## Requirements

- ▶ Completion of Level 1 Officials Course (Timekeeper)
- ▶ Completion of Level 2 Officials Course (Judge)
- ▶ Satisfactory attended and passed officials school
- ▶ Experience of judge at all levels of competitions (Approx. 5-6 competitions)
- ▶ Minimum of 2 regional assessments (acting as judge)
- ▶ Minimum of 2 national assessments (acting as judge)
- ▶ Vetting
- ▶ Safeguarding
- ▶ Club Membership

## What am I qualified to do now?

Fulfill the role of a named official (stroke or turn judge), at club regional and national competitions. Act as a referee at certain club and regional competitions.

Ongoing attendance at yearly CPD will be required to maintain your officials licence.

## Assessments (Regional and National)

Before being assessed as a Judge, the candidate must undergo a period of practical training and observation. This practical training must include working as a turn judge and a stroke judge at Club/Regional and/or National level and be validated by a completed SI Officials Log Book.

Once an appropriate level of experience has been reached (Minimum of 5-6 competitions), the candidate may request an assessment at the agreed level through Swim Ireland. The candidate must be assessed in both stroke and turn judge roles at a minimum of two Regional and two National level competitions. As noted previously experience must be verified by the logbook and a minimum of three months must have passed between assessments.

Swim Ireland will select the relevant role and competition for assessment and assessment will be carried out by an approved Assessor. Feedback will be provided to the candidate and the SI office which will confirm status of assessment. Upon receipt of a successful final assessment for a candidate, Swim Ireland will check all elements of the general officials criteria. If all has been completed successfully – SI will issue an officials licence and certificate upon application.

# National Referee

## Who can become a National Referee?

A licensed official (National Judge) who has gained further on deck experience acting as an official and wants to expand their knowledge and/or continue their journey along the official's pathway.

## Requirements

- ▶ Completion of Level 1 Officials Course (Timekeeper)
- ▶ Completion of Level 2 Officials Course (Judge)
- ▶ Satisfactory attended and passed officials school
- ▶ Qualified and Licensed National Judge
- ▶ Experience of referee at all levels of competitions (Approx. 5-6 competitions)
- ▶ Minimum of 2 regional assessments (acting as referee)
- ▶ Minimum of 2 national assessments (acting as referee)
- ▶ Vetting
- ▶ Safeguarding
- ▶ Club Membership

## What am I qualified to do now?

Fulfill the role of a named official at club, regional and national competitions. Act in any technical officials position at club, regional and national competitions. Eligible now to receive a National Referees licence and for consideration onto Pre FINA list.

Ongoing attendance at yearly CPD will be required to maintain your officials licence.

## Assessments (Regional and National)

Before being assessed as a referee, the candidate must undergo a period of practical training supported by a mentor selected by the SI officials committee. This practical training must include working as a shadow or mentored referee at regional or national level. A minimum of 5-6 competitions should be completed during a period of normally not less than 6 months.

Once an appropriate level of experience has been reached (Minimum of 5-6 competitions), the candidate may request an assessment at the agreed level through Swim Ireland. The candidate must be assessed in the referee role at a minimum of two regional and two national level competitions. As noted previously experience must be verified by the logbook and a minimum of three months must have passed between assessments.

Swim Ireland will select the relevant role and competition for assessment and assessment will be carried out by an approved Assessor. Feedback will be provided to the candidate and the SI office which will confirm status of assessment. Upon receipt of a successful final assessment for a candidate, Swim Ireland will check all elements of the general officials criteria. If all has been completed successfully – SI will issue an officials licence and certificate upon application.

# National Starter

## Who can become a National Starter?

A licensed official (National Judge) who has gained further on deck experience acting as an official and wants to expand their knowledge and/or continue their journey along the official's pathway.

## Requirements

- ▶ Completion of Level 1 Officials Course (Timekeeper)
- ▶ Completion of Level 2 Officials Course (Judge)
- ▶ Satisfactory attended and passed officials school
- ▶ Qualified National Judge
- ▶ Experience of starter at all levels of competitions (Approx. 5-6 competitions)
- ▶ Minimum of 2 regional assessments (acting as starter)
- ▶ Minimum of 2 national assessments (acting as starter)
- ▶ Vetting
- ▶ Safeguarding
- ▶ Club Membership

## What am I qualified to do now?

Fulfill the role of a named official at club, regional and national competitions. Act as a referee at certain club and regional competitions. Eligible now to receive a National Starters licence and for consideration onto the FINA Starter list.

## Assessments (Regional and National)

Before being assessed as a starter, the candidate must undergo a period of practical training supported by a mentor selected by the SI officials committee. This practical training must include working as a shadow or mentored starter, at regional or national level. A minimum of 5-6 competitions should be completed during a period of normally not less than 6 months. Experience must be noted through the officials logbook.

Once an appropriate level of experience has been reached (Minimum of 5-6 competitions), the candidate may request an assessment at the agreed level through Swim Ireland. The candidate must be assessed in the starter role at a minimum of two regional and two national level competitions. As noted previously experience must be verified by the logbook and a minimum of three months must have passed between assessments.

Swim Ireland will select the relevant role and competition for assessment and assessment will be carried out by an Assessor. Feedback will be provided to the candidate and the SI office which will confirm status of assessment. Upon receipt of a successful final assessment for a candidate, Swim Ireland will check all elements of the general officials criteria. If all has been completed successfully – SI will issue an officials license and certificate upon application.

# Officials Tutor

## Who can become an Officials Tutor?

Anyone wanting to deliver officials tutor training (Level 1 and 2) and impart their knowledge to candidates starting their journey on the official's pathway.

## Requirements

- ▶ Completion of Level 1 Officials Course (Timekeeper)
- ▶ Completion of Level 2 Officials Course (Judge)
- ▶ Satisfactory attended and passed officials school
- ▶ Qualified National Judge and National Referee
- ▶ Successful completion of presenters course (Training in delivering education)  
\*See note below
- ▶ Vetting
- ▶ Safeguarding
- ▶ Club Membership

## What am I qualified to do now?

Deliver Level 1 and Level 2 official courses

## Presenters Course

This is a 2-day course based on developing skills for presentation and gives you the skills to deliver engaging, interactive and professional training and education sessions. It will enable the holder to deliver officials training (Level 1 and 2) to trainee candidates. The course is theory and practical based and each candidate will be required to deliver a presentation on a chosen topic for assessment. You will cover the following topics within the course:

- ▶ Adult learning principles
- ▶ Interpretation of and developing the learning process
- ▶ Understanding the different types of learners
- ▶ Emotional advisory
- ▶ Presentational skills

\*After successful completion of the Presenters course you will be asked to attend and deliver/co-deliver a number of level 1 and 2 courses with a Senior Tutor. Once you have gained enough experience and been signed off in delivering both Level 1 and 2 courses you will be able to deliver Level 1 and 2 officials courses to the next group of officials in the country.

# Officials Assessor

## Who can become an Officials Tutor?

Anyone wanting to become an assessor and support the next batch of officials by assessing their delivery and providing feedback and advice in delivering their role. This is a great role for experienced officials who want to impart their knowledge to candidates wanting to progress along their journey on the official's pathway.

## Requirements

- ▶ Completion of Level 1 Officials Course (Timekeeper)
- ▶ Completion of Level 2 Officials Course (Judge)
- ▶ Satisfactory attended and passed officials school
- ▶ Qualified National Judge and National Referee

- ▶ Successful completion of assessor's course
- ▶ Vetting
- ▶ Safeguarding
- ▶ Club Membership

## What am I qualified to do now?

Assess candidates in becoming a National Judge

## Assessment

As part of the process in becoming an assessor you will need to observe and take part in an assessment being conducted by a senior assessor. It will then involve the conducting assessments whilst being observed by a senior assessor. Once you have gained enough experience and been signed off in this role, you will be able to assess officials around the country.



## FINA

Swim Ireland, as the National Governing Body (NGB) of Aquatics on the island of Ireland is entitled to nominate up to 3 Referees and 2 Starters to FINA on a biennial basis to be placed on the relevant FINA List. Officials remain on the List for a period of 4 years and new lists commence every second year. NGBs are also invited to nominate officials from any current list to be considered for International events run by LEN and FINA.

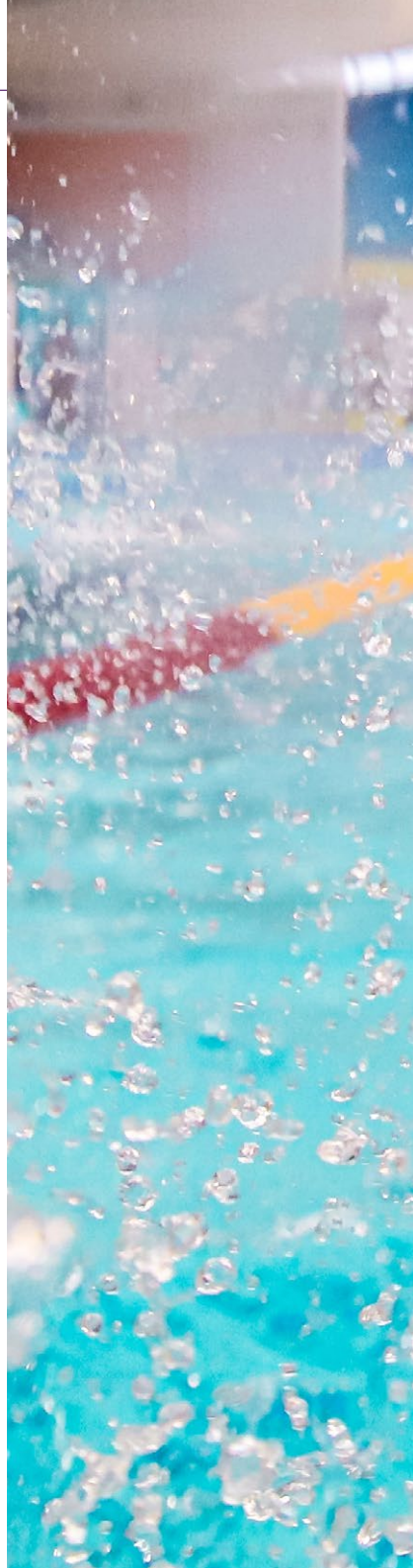
## Pre FINA List

Swim Ireland shall maintain a panel of up to 6 Licensed Referees who wish to be considered for future FINA lists. Anyone selected to the Pre-FINA list must be an experienced National Referee who has been selected by the officials selection committee in line with The Swim Ireland Officials Nomination Policy. Once on this list you will remain for 2 years in which time you can be considered for selection onto FINA list and ultimately FINA Referee.

## FINA List

A FINA List referee is an experienced referee who can be selected to officiate at European, World & Olympic events. You must have already been on the Pre-FINA list and will be selected by the officials selection committee in line with The Swim Ireland Officials Nomination Policy . Individuals will be eligible to initially stay on the FINA list for a period of 4 years, after which you may be selected for another 4 year period. Individuals can remain on the FINA Referee List for a maximum of 8 years.

\* FINA - The international federation recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for administering international competition in aquatic sports.





**SWIM  
IRELAND**

9