Swimming Australia
AWE Athlete Categorisation Nomination Guidelines
2017-2020

Strategic Context

A key strategy in the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) *Australia's Winning Edge (AWE) 2012-2022* game plan to move from world class to world best, is to identify Australia's high-potential athletes and ensure they receive the right support at the right time in their pathway.

Charged with delivering the ASC strategy, the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) developed an initial athlete categorisation framework in 2013 to identify the athletes with the greatest potential to contribute to AWE targets. Under the AWE athlete categorisation model, to be prioritised for support an athlete must demonstrate potential for future success. Past results alone are not the sole consideration.

The AWE Athlete Categories provide a consistent basis, both within and across sports, to:

- identify the athletes with the greatest potential to contribute to *Winning Edge* targets;
- inform the prioritisation of support to these athletes; and
- track athlete performance over time.

From November 2015, the AIS engaged with the National Institute Network (NIN) and National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) to discuss and consider adjustments to the initial 2013 framework for AWE athlete categorisation. The outcome of these discussions has resulted in a number of refinements that reflect the evolution of AWE.

A requirement of the AWE game plan was for sports to develop and update their own guidelines that describe the basis on which they will nominate athletes for the AWE Athlete Categories. To facilitate this process and inform the swimming specific allocation of support, Swimming Australia Ltd. (SAL) has developed this *SAL Athlete Categorisation Nomination Guidelines 2017-2020*.

Purpose

The *SAL Athlete Categorisation Nomination Guidelines 2017-2020* have been developed to feed into the AIS's *AWE* Athlete Categorisation model and inform the prioritisation of AIS support to identified athletes. SAL will review its nominations every 6 months and only athletes who compete in an event on the Olympic or Paralympic Games program may be nominated.

The Guidelines were approved by the SAL High Performance Committee on 5 November 2016.

SAL Athlete Categorisation Nomination Guidelines 2017-2020

Scope of these Guidelines

The *SAL Athlete Categorisation Nomination Guidelines 2017 – 2020* apply to Olympic Pool, Olympic Open Water and Paralympic Swimmers.

SAL will use the outcome of the categorisation process to:

- nominate athletes to the AIS's AWE Athlete Categories;
- inform SAL recommendations made to the State Institutes/State Academies of Sport (SIS/SAS) regarding the provision of support (scholarships) as required, noting that not all Institutes utilise the AWE Athlete Categories
- prioritise:
    - SAL's recommendations around the allocation of Commonwealth Government support through the dAIS scheme (direct athlete support) which is administered by the AIS; and
    - SAL support which may include access to financial support, altitude training camps, non-benchmark competitions, selection for various event and skill specific training camps, access to the AIS/SAL National Training Centre services and facilities.

Benefits of Being a Categorised Athlete

The hierarchy of AWE Athlete Categories will be used to inform (but may not determine) the prioritisation of the Swimming Australia, AIS and SIS/SAS high performance resources.

It is important to note that the provision of services from the AIS and SIS/SAS is subject to available resources. Being an AWE categorised athlete does not automatically entitle an athlete to receive support from the AIS and/or SIS/SAS, and athletes within the same category may not receive the same level of support.

Athlete Eligibility

Only athletes who compete in an Olympic, Paralympic or Commonwealth Games discipline may be nominated. SAL has determined that the Commonwealth Gold category is not applicable for the sport of swimming so no nominations will be made under this category.

The non-performance related eligibility requirements, include but are not limited to the following.

An athlete must:

- be an Australian citizen and eligible and available to represent Australia in international competition
- be a registered member of Swimming Australia, have a signed Swimmer Agreement, and have an agreed individual athlete performance plan (IAPP)
- comply with all relevant Swimming Australia policies including:
    - the Swimmer Agreement;
    - the Team Agreement;
    - the Code of Conduct; and
    - the Policies and Rules of Swimming as amended from time to time
- comply with all anti-doping requirements of FINA, Swimming Australia and the Australian Sports Commission (ASC)

- be actively training towards the next benchmark event

- maintain a lifestyle conducive to sporting excellence

- abide by both the rules and the spirit of the sport of swimming

- maintain the high standard of personal behaviour expected of an athlete representing Australia

- not bring themselves, the sport of swimming, Swimming Australia or the AIS into disrepute

Para athletes should hold a Review or Confirmed status international classification. The international classification must align with the sport class for which they are nominated. Any para athlete without an international classification cannot be categorised higher than Emerging. Para athletes who do not hold an international classification should hold a national classification and be planning to seek international classification within an acceptable timeframe

Performance Criteria

Swimmers will be nominated for the AWE Athlete Categories by SAL based on the criteria provided at **Appendix 1.**

All athletes who satisfy the performance and eligibility criteria in these nomination guidelines can be nominated by SAL to the AWE Athlete Categories.

Special Consideration

Should an exceptional circumstance prevent an athlete from achieving the required Olympic / World Championship (or equivalent) event result for Podium or Podium Ready, and there is compelling evidence that the athlete should be included in one of these categories, SAL may submit a request for special consideration to the AIS.

Appeals

Athletes are provided with an opportunity to write to the Executive Manager, Performance outlining their issues or concerns with the process or nominations.

Nomination Timeframes

NSOs are required to review their nominations for AWE athlete categorisation twice per year. SALs nominated timeframes for this to occur are after the annual benchmark selection event and after the benchmark event (approximately May and October annually). At these times athletes may be added, removed or moved to a different category.

AWE Categorisation and dAIS

The AIS will, from time to time, review its direct athlete support (dAIS), performance support (SSSM) and personal excellence programs in light of the AWE Athlete Categories.

An athlete must be categorised to be eligible for a dAIS grant.

SAL Athlete Categorisation Nomination Guidelines 2017-2020

Guidelines Governance

The *SAL Athlete Categorisation Nomination Guidelines 2017-2020* will be overseen by SAL High Performance Committee. The SAL High Performance Unit will be responsible for managing the implementation of the Guidelines and any day-to day operational requirements.

Review Process

A review to determine if the Guidelines are meeting AIS and SAL requirements will be undertaken by the SAL High Performance Unit in consultation with the AIS and other system partners on an annual basis.

The AIS will review the AWE athlete categorisation guidelines every four years at the same time as AWE sport categorisation guidelines. NSOs will be advised of any changes to these guidelines should they occur.

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Appendix 1: SAL Athlete Categorisation Performance Criteria 2017 - 2020

APPENDIX 1: SAL ATHLETE CATEGORISATION PERFORMANCE CRITERIA 2017-2020

Podium Pathway Category		Description
Podium	AIS	*Athlete who had a medal performance at a world championship (or equivalent) event in the previous 24 months and is considered capable of a medal at the next world championship (or equivalent) event.*
	SAL	• Athlete who had a medal performance in an individual Olympic or Paralympic event, at a World Championship, Olympics or Paralympics in the previous 24 months (inclusive of 2 benchmark events).[1] • Finalist member of a relay team who had a medal performance in Olympic or Paralympic events, at a World Championship, Olympics or Paralympics at the most recent benchmark event.[2] **And considered capable of a medal performance at the next international benchmark event (Olympic/Paralympic Games or World Championships)**
Podium Ready	AIS	*Athlete who placed fourth to eighth at the most recent world championship (or equivalent) event and is considered capable of progressing to Podium in the next two years.*

	SAL	• Individual or finalist member of a relay team, who placed 4th – 8th in Olympic or Paralympic events, at a World Championship, Olympics or Paralympics in the previous 12 months (most recent benchmark event).
		• For years where there has not been an Olympic / Paralympic Games or World Championships within the last 12 months (2018), the following rankings for **Pool** and **Para** athlete based off the *Virtual World Championships[3]* will be relevant:
		  – Individual swimmer ranked 1st – 8th
		  – Finalist member of a relay team ranked 1st – 8th[4]
		Note: For years where there has not been an Olympic / Paralympic Games or World Championships within the last 12 months (2018), **Open Water** athletes cannot attain a category higher than Podium Potential A[5] (based on qualification for the benchmark team in an Olympic events) as there is no 'world' event and no way to rank the athlete performances at events such as World Cups.
		And considered capable of progressing to Podium in the next two years

Commonwealth Gold	AIS	*Athlete who does not fit into the categories above but is considered capable of a gold medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.*
	SAL	N/A

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1 Individual medallists who do not maintain a medal winning performance at the subsequent benchmark event and then fail to qualify for following benchmark team will be assessed at the Podium Potential B level after benchmark selection event.

2 Relay medallists who fail to qualify for the following benchmark team will be assessed at the Podium Potential B level after the benchmark selection event.

3 *Virtual World Championships

For the **Olympic Performance Stream**, the Virtual World Championships combines the results from the "A" final of Olympic events at the following Championships, limited to a maximum of two athletes per nation: 2018 Commonwealth Games, 2018 Pan Pacific Championships,2018 European Championships, 2018 Asian Games, 2018 South American Championships

For the **Paralympic Performance Stream**, The *Virtual World Championships* combine the results of the "A" final of Paralympic events at the following Championships, limited to a maximum of two athletes per nation: 2018 Commonwealth Games, 2018 Para Pan Pacific Championships, 2018 European Championships, 2018 Asian Para Games.

4 Athletes categorised at the Podium Ready level who fail to qualify for the following benchmark team will be assessed at the Podium Potential B level after the benchmark selection event.

5 This excludes open water athletes that were a medallist in an Olympic discipline at the most recent benchmark event.

APPENDIX 1: SAL ATHLETE CATEGORISATION PERFORMANCE CRITERIA 2017-2020

Podium Pathway Category			Description		
Podium Potential	AIS		*Athlete who is considered capable of progressing to at least Podium Ready in the next two years.*		**International**
	SAL	A	A **Pool**, **Open Water or Para** athlete who is a member of the current benchmark team (selected in an Olympic or Paralympic event), who also qualified for their first benchmark team within the last 24 months (two most recent benchmark teams) **And considered capable of progressing to Podium Ready in the next two years**	AIS	Athlete who does not satisfy any of the *Podium Pathway* category criteria but has earned selection for the national senior team or squad preparing for the NSOs benchmark event.
		B	A **Pool**, **Open Water or Para** athlete who did not qualify for the most recent benchmark team but who was a member of the previous benchmark team (selected in an Olympic or Paralympic event) and is still deemed as having potential to progress to Podium Ready level. A **Pool** or **Para** athlete who did not qualify for the most recent benchmark team but who has achieved a time in the current calendar year at the Australian Championships or a designated international meet that is ranked top 8 in the world (based on previous year 2/nation world rankings) for a Pool athlete, or top 5 in the world (based on previous year 3/nation world rankings) for a Para athlete. **And considered capable of progressing to Podium Ready in the next two years**	SAL	A **Pool, Open Water or Para** athlete who is a member of the current benchmark team, but who has not progressed to and maintained Podium Ready category or higher within 24 months of making their first benchmark team.
Developing	AIS		*Athlete who is considered capable of progressing to at least Podium Potential in the next two years.*		
	SAL		• A **Pool** athlete who is a current member of the SAL Youth Transition Squad. • The highest placed male and female finishers in the 10km event at the annual **Open Water** benchmark qualifier event that did not qualify for the benchmark team. • A **Para** athlete that is a member of current SAL National Para Development Squad. **And considered capable of progressing to at least Podium Potential in the next two years.**		
Emerging	AIS		*Athlete who is considered capable of progressing to at least Developing in the next two years.*		
	SAL		• A **Pool** or **Open Water** athlete who is a current member of the SAL Junior International Benchmark Team (Olympic event athlete selected on the Junior Benchmark Team have achieved a qualifying standard equal to or better than 8th in to the final at the most recent Senior World Championships + 5%.) • **Para** athlete, domestically, but not yet internationally classified, whose performance is ranked in the Top 10 in the world (Paralympic events) 3/nation based on the previous year's world rankings. **And is considered capable of progressing to at least Developing in the next two years.**		