



Swim England
Swimming

Performance
Centre

Performance Centre - Intervention and Signposting Principles

In this document Swim England aims to set out guidelines around the sign posting of appropriate athletes to the Swim England Performance Centres.

An athlete, at the age of 16-18 years is at a crossroads of their swimming career. There is a natural point in time to explore new opportunities due to the education system in the UK. Choosing an appropriate 'swimming' pathway is crucial to keeping swimmers in the UK and swimming. A good swimming club / university programme will greatly affect their ongoing success, motivation, career choices and welfare.

This document puts the athlete at the centre of those decisions to ensure the seamless transition from one daily training environment to another. It is the intention of this document to encourage all parties involved in the process of nurturing and progressing our swimming talent to communicate effectively and make decisions which are in the best welfare and performance interests of the athlete.

Swim England's intervention

The involvement of Swim England and the swimming talent team will include

- A presentation at the Swim England stroke camps called 'Beyond the School Gates' will highlight all of the potential options available to swimmers post 18 years of age. There will be a particular section included in this that highlights England's performance centres.
- Included in Swim England's international meet there will be a further individual discussion around the athletes swimming aspirations. A further discussion around performance centres will also be included here
- Hard and electronic copies of material detailing the performance centres will be produced and displayed on swim England website and at appropriate competition events.
- Available space at summer and winter meets for Performance centres to promote their brand and swimming provision.

Signposting Principles

In developing this document Swim England has identified a series of principles, which will add clarity and consistency to the process:

- The clear objective of enabling the athlete to take an informed decision, having acquired appropriate information and reviewed all of the available options.
- Clear understanding that the final decision belongs to the athlete.
- Clear understanding that all involved want the best for the athlete.
- Clear understanding that no party, be that a home coach, club, academic institution, SE Performance Centre or National Governing Body has 'ownership' of an athlete.
- Clear understanding that Swim England wants to help "guide" the process.
- Clear understanding that the opinion of the home coach is important in the decision making process.

The Process Protocols

1. A clear need for further discussion as identified by the above principles, is followed up by:
 - a) The athletes' current home coach, following discussions with the athlete/parent.
 - b) The athlete contacting a member of the Swim England National Talent Team or contacting a Swim England Performance Centres head coach for discussions on 'the next steps'

NB The PC coach should not engage with discussions until clarity and conformation that the home coach is fully aware
2. We encourage home coaches to discuss swimmers extended pathway provision with SE Performance Centre head coach in the first instance.
3. University Open Days, appointments should be made to meet with potential athletes.
4. SE Performance Centre offers taster weekend(s) for potential athletes and home coaches.
5. SE Performance Centre/University provides and utilises a manned advertising stand with appropriate materials/information at the SE Winter Nationals.
6. All options are openly discussed, in the best interests of the athlete, this can include SE representatives.
7. In line with the above signposting principles, all parties will accept the decision made by the athlete as final.

Further considerations:

The following elements will be considered when evaluating the options available to the athletes:

- Coach compatibility.
- Welfare, including parental support
- Facilities – Access/space/environment
- Location practicalities – distance to pool; suitability, local accommodation etc.
- Team – numbers/events/gender/expectations re: competition commitments and timing.
- Availability of Sport Science & Sport Medicine support.
- Academic – grades, flexibility, courses & quality.
- Finances – including fees, accommodation costs, scholarships etc.
- Life experience.
- Track record.
- Swim England's talent team insight