

# Incorporating British Swimming's OADF into a club programme

## Wycombe District Swimming Club

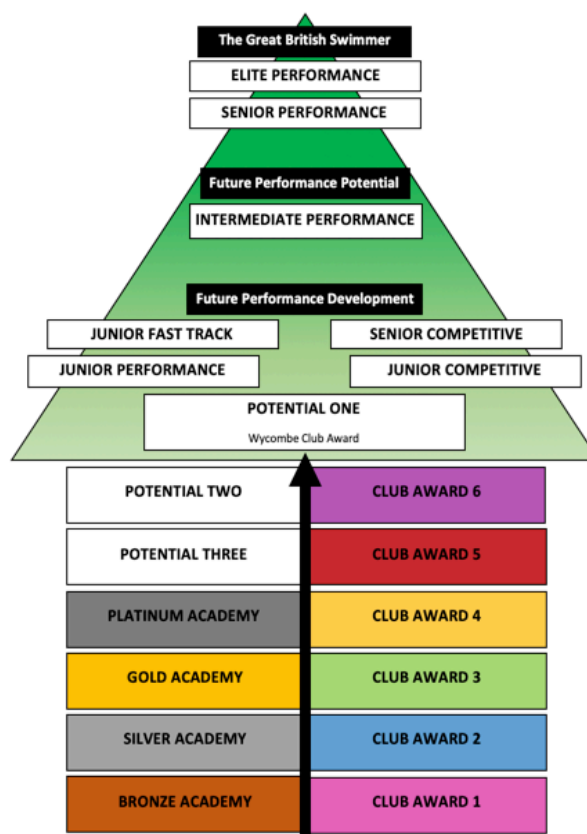


When the **Optimal Athlete Development Framework** was launched, we felt that it would be easy for it to remain as a PDF, unopened, and unacted upon. However, the OADF is too good a tool for it to sit unused. We felt that the best way for it to be 'used' would be to incorporate it into the **'daily training environment'** of our programme at Wycombe.

The OADF has two distinct levels; the **'The Great British Swimmer'** and **'Future Performance Potential'**; and for a club like Wycombe District, these two levels link into our **Intermediate & Senior Performance Squads**. Both of these squads have produced swimmers that have achieved International and British Medallists. However, whilst these two squads would cover around 45 swimmers in our programme, it would be "too high" for the rest of our club's pathway...

At Wycombe we have 640 swimmers in the whole programme and from this around 400 swimmers that would sit within our **Competitive and Performance pathway**. So, in order to provide a framework that would develop swimmers in the principles of the OADF we decided to structure our 'club version' of the OADF, based on the simple diagram opposite.

You can see that 'The Great British Swimmer' sits at the top of our programme, and the 'Future Performance Potential' is for the squad below. We have created the **"Future Performance Development"** level which is for two of our youngest performance squads (ages 10-14) and our top two 'competitive' squads (that are for ages 11-18). We have adapted the FPP to define the FPD.



**Swim England have recently launched their Club Awards Scheme** and we felt that the areas that this covered linked in well with the OADF and developing progressions in our programme. Based on this we have used all 6 club awards through our Academy and Potential squads. We are in the process of developing our own "award" for Potential One and it is going to include some key areas that the OADF highlights – basically a transition from the Club Award to the OADF. We feel that in having an award for the swimmers to achieve, based around 'behaviours', it channels the swimmers (and their parents!) minds as to what we see as important, in their swimming journeys at Wycombe.

Fundamentally, the crucial part of this project is **HOW** are we implementing the OADF into our programme – at all three levels (TGBS, FPP & FPD). We've explained above about the structure, and below is the basic framework of how we are rolling it out to our swimmers, squads and their parents. **Extracts are posted on the next page**, but if coaches would like to see the full document, please get in touch with us.

PERSON				
THE GREAT BRITISH SWIMMER	ELITE PERFORMANCE	SENIOR PERFORMANCE	Future Performance Potential	Future Performance Development
HOW?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>

ATHLETE				
THE GREAT BRITISH SWIMMER	ELITE PERFORMANCE	SENIOR PERFORMANCE	Future Performance Potential	Future Performance Development
HOW?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>

PERFORMER				
THE GREAT BRITISH SWIMMER	ELITE PERFORMANCE	SENIOR PERFORMANCE	Future Performance Potential	Future Performance Development
HOW?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> <li>• Shows a high level of commitment to the sport</li> </ul>

PERSON					
		FULFILLED	RESILIENT & ROBUST	ASPIRATIONAL	POSSESS A GROWTH MINDSET
THE GREAT BRITISH SWIMMER	SENIOR PERFORMANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supportive of each other, irrespective of sporting success</li> <li>Being positive every time they are at pool</li> <li>They have their own identity within a group</li> <li>Takes ownership of their actions and behaviours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open to change</li> <li>They are capable of learning from setbacks in a positive way</li> <li>It is possible for them to cope with the demands of both training and competition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always looking for ways to improve</li> <li>Relentless towards their goals</li> <li>Can make appropriate decisions both in and out of the pool</li> <li>They are professional in how they conduct themselves, and someone to look up to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always seeking advice and feedback, and then acting appropriately</li> <li>Remaining positive when given feedback and not taking it as a criticism</li> <li>Open to learning irrespective of the outcome</li> </ul>
	HOW?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training camp</li> <li>Team bonding</li> <li>Away meets</li> <li>Planning</li> <li>Goal setting – more outcome based but still focusing on process, individual and team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure planned into training and competitions (failure week, overload)</li> <li>Goal setting – agreed between coach and swimmer</li> <li>Attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions between coach and swimmer</li> <li>Goal setting – process</li> <li>Club captains</li> <li>Give back by assisting with lower squads (Potential and Academy squads)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be comfortable with being uncomfortable</li> <li>Swimmer and coach meetings</li> <li>Planning</li> <li>Education on goal setting</li> </ul>

		ENJOYS THE JOURNEY	RESILIENT & ROBUST	DRIVEN	GOOD LEARNER	INDEPENDENT
FUTURE PERFORMANCE POTENTIAL	INTERMEDIATE PERFORMANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone has a shared goal and are supportive of one another</li> <li>They capable of balancing swimming, school, and social</li> <li>Focus on long-term results</li> <li>Own identity within a group</li> <li>Enjoying what they do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setbacks are an opportunity to learn</li> <li>They can remain calm in difficult situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Swimming is not a sacrifice but an opportunity to be the best that they can be</li> <li>Motivated to achieve their goals</li> <li>Goals are still process orientated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes on challenge with no hesitation</li> <li>Receives feedback positively</li> <li>Remain grounded and don't think they are above others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being accountable for their own actions and behaviours</li> <li>Managing their time between training and other commitments</li> </ul>
	HOW?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training camp</li> <li>Team bonding</li> <li>Away meets</li> <li>Planning</li> <li>Goal setting – individual and team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal setting</li> <li>Plan failure into sessions</li> <li>Plan meets to fail</li> <li>Attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Club structure – like minded</li> <li>Goal setting – progressive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being challenged in training and competitions</li> <li>Education</li> <li>Getting to know the swimmer/coach</li> <li>Having a say on own development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning – school, swimming, social</li> <li>Swimmer and coach meetings</li> <li>Exam timetable balance</li> </ul>

PERFORMER					
		ARENA SKILLS	RACE CRAFT	PSYCHOLOGICALLY PREPARED	PHYSICALLY PRIMED
THE GREAT BRITISH SWIMMER	SENIOR PERFORMANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being resilient when facing the challenge of competitions</li> <li>Staying focused and calm when the unexpected happens</li> <li>Displaying the correct body language – showing they want to be there</li> <li>Enjoying every aspect of race day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goes into every race with a plan that is adaptable to the situation</li> <li>Understanding all factors that can affect a race</li> <li>Evaluates their performance in a realistic way</li> <li>Have significant experience competing at various levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain calm and perform when faced with change, setback or pressure</li> <li>Focused on the process of their race not the outcome</li> <li>Ignore distractions around them</li> <li>Treat every day the same – physically, mentally, and emotionally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has an individualised pool-based and pre-race warm up that are rehearsed and adaptable to change</li> </ul>
	HOW?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competitions planned to experience failure</li> <li>Supporting team members in every race</li> <li>Away meets as a team</li> <li>International meets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Race process sheets</li> <li>Attendance at various meets of different levels to perfect processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychology talks (group and individual)</li> <li>Challenge/failure planned into training – know how to deal with it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individualised warm up plan – pre pool, pool based, post pool</li> <li>Physio screening</li> </ul>

As mentioned, the crucial part for us is to make use of the OADF and turn it into something that is tangible and real within the daily training environment. The coaches, athletes (and ideally, parents) all need to 'live' this and gain more understanding on how to get closer to what it means to be "The Great British Swimmer". There is no point in just printing off the OADF and asking swimmers to become more like "this"... the swimmers/parents need to be educated and developed through the OADF every session, week, cycle and year through conversations, training, competitions and meetings etc.

In addition to the various ways of developing the attributes of the OADF its important to enable your athletes to review where they feel they 'fit with it' at the moment; and regularly reevaluate the **progress** or **regression** they have made on various areas.

Successful performance outcomes (or negative performance outcomes) at important meets like 'Trials' or the 'benchmark meet' are a result of various factors and many swimmers (and coaches) can lack the insight into what those factors are. It's not just as simple as "I've done the work, why am I not improving?" There are always hidden 'blind spots' that coaches aren't aware off, indeed, the swimmers, as well! *i.e. do swimmers recognise the impact that their action or inaction has, when it matters.*

We've decided to look into this as a club and we have created (draft 1) of our own "club swimmer insight" tool. This simple questionnaire provides direction to our **conversations** and prioritises areas for the coach and athlete to work on. It also (when required) gives parents more of a "rational" understanding as to why their swimmer is (or isn't) making the desired progress. It creates deeper buy-in to the programme and this overall helps to drive the programme.

We asked swimmers to rate themselves from effectively: -5 to +5 with 0 being deemed "average". Ratings below:

Optimal Athlete Development Framework Insights										
Score yourself by putting a cross in the box that you believe best represents YOU!										
There is no wrong answer, we can review your scores afterwards										
EXTREMELY POOR	VERY POOR	POOR	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT	WORLD CLASS		
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x