Australian Levels Program

Summary of Program Framework
Contents
INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................... 3#
Overall Goals of the WAG Australian Levels Program ....................................................... 3#
Guiding Principles of the WAG Australian Levels review .................................................... 4#
One United WAG Stream .................................................................................................... 5#
The WAG ALP Framework .................................................................................................. 6#
The WAG Competition Structure – National and International Levels ................................ 7#
The WAG National Levels Program .................................................................................... 8#
   National Levels .............................................................................................................. 8#
   Physical Testing Program .............................................................................................. 9#
   Skill Development Program .......................................................................................... 9#
WAG International Levels Program ................................................................................... 10#
Open Division Concept ...................................................................................................... 11#
Athlete Pathway .................................................................................................................. 12#
   The Foundation Program ............................................................................................... 12#
The New WAG National Levels Program ......................................................................... 14#
   Direct Benefits to Gymnasts, Coaches and Clubs ......................................................... 14#
Appendix 1: ....................................................................................................................... 17#
Appendix 2: ....................................................................................................................... 18#
Appendix 3: ....................................................................................................................... 20#

This document may be read in combination with the New WAG ALP L1-10 Skill Content.
INTRODUCTION

The Women's Artistic Gymnastics (WAG) National Levels and International Levels Program 2009 – 2012 has been revised to better align the program with current Gymnastics Australia strategic direction and to assist WAG in reaching its’ full potential in terms of athlete and technical membership numbers. The new WAG Australian Levels Program beyond 2015 (incorporating International and National Stream) has been structured to provide gymnasts with an inclusive, attainable and challenging sport program. The new Australian Levels Program will continue to provide appropriate pathways that allow gymnasts, irrespective of their ability, to develop to their full athletic potential.

Overall Goals of the WAG Australian Levels Program

A revised WAG Australian Levels program has the overall goals of:

- Increasing WAG membership numbers (clubs, athlete and technical members)
- Increasing the rate of involvement and retention of athletes at the grassroots levels (Level 0 to 2) and moving past the foundation level (to Level 3)
- Providing one clear, progressive and attainable pathway for gymnasts to move through the Australian Levels Program
- Identifying athletes to the appropriate training pathway
- Providing a National Levels program that enables all States to field (state) teams to the National Championships at Levels 7-10
- Facilitating the movement of athletes from sports participation to the gymnastics workforce.
Guiding Principles of the WAG Australian Levels review

The guiding principles in the revision of the WAG Australian Levels program were:

- **One pathway** - National Levels Program will provide ONE clear, progressive and attainable pathway for gymnasts
- **Sustainable** - The National Levels program will have longevity - allowing it to be used across more than one Olympic cycle.
- **Motivational** - The National Levels program will provide all participants with the confidence, competence and motivation to progress through the levels
- **Relevant and retentive** - The National Levels program rewards will be relevant to participants and will encourage ongoing progression through the levels (promoting retention seamlessly from one level to the next)
- **Progressive and Developmental** - The National Levels program contains skills that are progressive and developmental in nature
- **Reliable and Rewarding** - The National Levels program has valid and reliable assessment of performance outcomes (competitive & developmental), with tangible, attainable rewards.
- **Ultimate success** - The ultimate success of the National Levels Program will be evident by the realisation of talented gymnasts identified and developed throughout the system.
One United WAG Stream

The WAG Australian Levels program consists of two streams developing from a united Foundations Program. The two streams are:

- The WAG National Levels program
- The WAG International Levels program

This is a shift from the current WAG program to the proposed WAG program in the future. See Figure 1 below.

![Figure 1: Future WAG Program](image)

The competition and skill content overview is outlined below in Figure 2.

![Figure 2: WAG Australian Levels Program Competition Structure](image)

There will be opportunities created for the two streams to be united at various points in the pathway. This is explained in the athlete pathway section. See Figure 8.
The WAG ALP Framework

The framework of the WAG Australian Levels Program

The WAG Australian Levels Program will comprise of a range of components that aim to support the athlete development through the pathway. The provision of WAG resources in the areas of physical preparation and skill development and subsequent testing programs will assist the coach and clubs to build a platform for longevity and sustainability in the WAG pathway. These resources will link with the new education Framework. See Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Components of the WAG Australian Levels Program

N.B. if initiated in 2015
The WAG Competition Structure – National and International Levels

Gymnastics Australia will direct the structure and competition format for the athletes at the peak of the WAG Australian Levels Program.

The WAG National Commission will provide guidelines and recommendations for state, regional and club events, with the flexibility for the organising bodies to adjust the competition format to suit the needs of their community. See Appendix 1.

The new WAG Australian Levels Program will also provide activity based resources and tools for clubs to use at the foundation level of the sport. See Figure 3 and Appendix 5.

The WAG National Commission guidelines for National Levels events will be as follows:

- It is recommended that no more than 20 gymnasts be placed into a competition division to ensure an ideal competitive structure where reward and effort is balanced.
- The states, regions and clubs may choose to adopt a range of methods to provide divisions within a specific level. See Appendices 1, 2, 3.
- It is the ultimate aim to build the numbers in the sport at the grassroots level and throughout the pathway.

As the athlete numbers and competitive divisions increase there will be transitional changes to the structure of the National events program (over a period of time). This is reflected in Figure 4 below. See Appendix 2.

![WAG Australian Levels Program – National Levels 2015-2020 – National Competition Structure](image)

Figure 4: WAG National Levels Program Competition Structure 2015 and beyond (N.B if implemented in 2015)
The WAG National Levels Program

The WAG National Levels Program consists of three integrated programs. Sitting alongside, and parallel to, the National Levels competition program are the Skills Development Program (SDP) and National Physical Testing Program (NPTP). The framework of the new WAG National Levels Program is shown in the following table. Refer to Figure 5.

![WAG National Levels Program Overview](image)

**Figure 5: WAG National Levels Program Overview**

National Levels

The WAG National Levels Competition program consists of a step-wise development of skilled performance based on a modified FIG Code of Points. Levels 1-2 consists of flexible skill based circuits. Levels 3-4-5 gymnasts perform compulsory routines. Optional routine choreography is introduced in Level 6 with a set of compulsory elements. Optional elements with no bonus are required at Level 7 and 8. Optional skills with the opportunity for limited bonus are required in Levels 9 and with unlimited bonus at Level 10.
Physical Testing Program
The aim of the National Physical Testing Program (NPTP) is to provide support for the National Levels Program in the form of a graduated assessment structure to develop and monitor the strength and flexibility development of gymnasts relative to their skill and competition level.

This program will allow coaches to monitor the progress and development of their gymnast’s physical preparation, corresponding with needs of the gymnasts’ competitive level. The release of the current WAG PTP will be revised to align directly with the new WAG National Levels Program. Future resources for coaches (WAG Physical Preparation Development Program; PDP) will be built in to assist with physical preparation development.

Skill Development Program
The Skill Development Program includes teaching method and skill progressions. It will be developed and be available with the program package in the subsequent years.

In summary, the release of the entire program will be in three parts:

1. WAG National Levels Skills Program and Competition Format
   a. Include Routine content, videos, music and technical content
   b. Include revised Physical Testing Program
2. WAG Physical Preparation Development Program (PDP)
3. Skills Development Program (SDP)
WAG International Levels Program

The WAG International Levels Program feeds athletes into International competition and is directly guided by the International Code of Points. (Federation of International Gymnastics; FIG CoP). The rules and regulations are reviewed every four years and the Australian International Levels Program is led by this direction, therefore the International Levels program requires the flexibility to be adjusted accordingly. Further changes to the International Levels program may occur at the conclusion of this Olympic cycle in preparation for the next. For 2015 there are some superficial changes to the labelling of the divisions. These changes are outlined in Figure 6 below.

![WAG Australian Levels Program - international Levels Program Overview 2015](image)

Figure 6: WAG International Levels program 2015

The facilitation of the transfer between the International and National Streams is explained in the athlete pathways section. For more information about the International Levels program refer to the WAG Technical Information page on Gymnastics Australia’s website.
Open Division Concept

The Open division is a conceptual proposal to further discuss and develop after the foundations of the WAG Australia Levels Program has been established. The philosophy behind this idea is to provide an opportunity to link the two streams and for individual apparatus specialists to be rewarded. It’s though this could keep older gymnasts active in the sport for longer, creating a training environment which works better with their student lifestyle.

The additional identified benefits provided by this concept are:

- Rewards under a common umbrella and links the International and National Streams
- Provides retention opportunities for the National Levels gymnasts who are unable to commit to the full time training load at National Level 10
- Provides an opportunity for apparatus specialists in the National Stream.
- Allows additional opportunities and rewards for those athletes at the culmination of the National Stream program
- Provides a platform to build a state or national based “circuit” to increase competition opportunities at the upper end of the National Stream program.

It is important to note that an Open division would not replace the end point in the National Levels pathway, but would enhance the event system and provide additional pathways for individual strengths in older athletes. See Figure 7 below.

There is more work to be undertaken on this concept in the future however, qualification for Open could be through the State team or in addition to a State team.

Figure 7: WAG Open division Concept
**Athlete Pathway**

A key guiding principle of the WAG review was to establish one clear, progressive and attainable pathway for gymnasts. To sustain diverse, incongruent pathways without sound developmental basis would be a detriment to the long term development of the sport.

The WAG athlete pathway caters for all abilities. Athletes need to experience success, gain a positive experience and reach their maximum potential.

![Diagram of WAG Australian Levels Program](image)

**Figure 8: All abilities pathway**

This is not limited to the development of the talented athlete, but also the expansion of opportunities for all abilities and inclusion. Providing limited hour competitions, smaller divisions at events, age groups and 2-event competitions can promote this. Opportunities are also created for transition into other Gymsports and the gymnastics workforce.

**The Foundation Program**

The Foundation Program forms the basis of the WAG Australian Levels Program and is a skill based program that includes the opportunity for every WAG gymnast to commence at the same starting point. This skill program is supported by the physical and skill testing program and has no competition focus. See Figure 7 below. See Appendix 7.
The WAG athlete has the opportunity to travel upwards through two streams of development, one being an accelerated, age-based program (the International Levels Program). Throughout the pathway there are continual opportunities to transfer between the two streams as an athlete develops.

The Physical, Skill Development and Testing Programs can be utilised to consolidate the links between the two streams and facilitate movement from one stream to the other. For example, should a gymnast achieve above a specific benchmark on a club physical testing assessment she could be recommend to transition to the International Stream.

The review of the WAG content and re-development of routines provides the opportunity to link the two streams in the lower part of the pathway with common routines. For example, the floor routine (music and dance) at National Level 4 could be utilised for the International Level 4 program when the revision on the International Level routines takes place.

There is also a link at the National and International Level 10 division through the proposed Open Division concept. (See page 12.) This would unite the two streams again at the culmination of the National Stream by providing rewards under a common umbrella.
The New WAG National Levels Program

Direct Benefits to Gymnasts, Coaches and Clubs

The introduction of the new ALP framework provides many benefits to our member clubs.

Compulsory Program Benefits

The benefits of the Compulsory program in Level 3 to 6 include:

1. Compulsory routines ensure that the athletes develop the correct skills and techniques for continuous improvement.
2. Compulsory routines have no bonus skills and this provides a “level playing field” for junior competitive gymnasts.
3. Compulsory routines teach musicality and dance for the young gymnasts.
4. Compulsory routines with provided choreography reduce the resources a club needs to prepare their compulsory level gymnasts.
5. Compulsory routines teach the basic skills of choreography to coaches and gymnasts.
6. Compulsory routines enhance the movement of gymnasts UP through the levels.
7. A compulsory set of routines helps to make the transition to competitive events less costly (little or no fees for music, choreography, additional coaches etc.)
8. Compulsory routines integrate with the new Coaching Education program.

Judging Guidelines

The benefits of the judging system include:

1. A judging structure that will allow for the scores to build upwards as the athletes move through the program, thus providing motivation with increased difficulty.
2. The ability to transition athletes and coaches into judging through the introductory level with minimal requirements.
3. An increased number of judges being able to judge both International and National Stream as the general table of faults are consistent.
4. A modified Code of Points (CoP) for the National Levels Stream will allow the sustainability of the program over more than one Olympic Cycle and a consistent direction for these athletes.
Competition Structure

The benefits of the competition structure include:

1. The provision of flexible resources to assist with the development of events at the foundation level of the sport.
2. Short routines, simplified judging and fewer numbers per session will promote more efficient competitions.
3. The flexibility with competition formats will allow clubs and states to develop and design competition formats to meet the needs of their community.
4. The number of competitors in state sanctioned events will increase as the ease of engaging with the competitive routines increases.
5. There will be an increased number of rewards through the system without the need for additional competition sessions.
6. The National event structure will provide the potential of additional numbers of athletes attending Australian Championships and additional awards. See Appendix 2

Athlete Pathway

The direct benefits for the athletes’ pathway include:

1. A clear, continual, developmental skill pathway to build athlete development with resources to support this.
2. An increase in the number of WAG gymnasts moving through the levels and remaining in the sport as the program is achievable and motivational.
3. An increase in overall participation in WAG, as the program is accessible and achievable to athletes of all abilities.
4. An increase in the retention of WAG gymnasts in Levels 3-4-5 due to the less onerous routines and requirements.
5. There will be greater encouragement for the athletes moving upwards through the system
   a. More efficient movement of gymnasts through the levels. This will be achieved by the use of compulsory routines in Levels 3-4-5.
   b. It will reduce the resources required (such as choreographers and music purchase) in member clubs to prepare Levels 3-4-5 gymnasts.
6. The pathway will no longer change at the end of each cycle, but remain sustainable over a longer period of time.
7. A clear link between the National and International Streams throughout the developmental pathway. See Figure 8.
8. The opportunities to transition into a range of ability pathways including other Gymsports and the gymnastics workforce.
Coach and Club Benefits

The direct benefits for the coaches and clubs include:

1. A reduction in cost to the club as the transition through the WAG program is less costly (fees for music, choreography, additional coaches etc.).
2. Flexible resources will be provided to the clubs to support events at the foundation level of the sport.
3. Additional resources will be provided, developed and distributed to support the skill framework and competition formats.
4. The WAG National Levels resources will integrate with the new Coaching Education program.
5. The resources will support coach education within the club.
6. A united and flexible framework that will enable the club to provide the athlete with a broad range of opportunities.
Appendix 1:

Proposed format for Australian Championships – National Levels 7-10

Division into both levels and age groups at National Championships & National Clubs provides the opportunity for recognition and reward. This also encourages the growth of the full spectrum of our sport which encourages both early developers and a pathway for mature athletes. This is a key to meeting the Gymnastics Australia objective of “Engage & Enthuse”. Refer to the outline below.

Year 1 Maximum 11 sessions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Team and Qualification</th>
<th>Event finals and awards ***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>8 in a team, 8 to compete</td>
<td>Top 32/36 competitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 scores count</td>
<td>U 13 Awards, AA and App</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 sessions</td>
<td>2 sessions for team (64 athletes)</td>
<td>13 &amp; Over, AA and App</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 8**</td>
<td>8 in a team, 8 to compete</td>
<td>Top 32/36 competitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 scores count</td>
<td>U 14 Awards, AA and App</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 sessions</td>
<td>2 sessions for team (64 athletes)</td>
<td>14 &amp; Over, AA and App</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 9**</td>
<td>8 in a team, 8 to compete</td>
<td>Top 32/36 competitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 scores to count</td>
<td>U 15 Awards, AA and App</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 sessions</td>
<td>1 or 2 sessions for team (64 athletes)</td>
<td>15 &amp; Over, AA and App</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 10**</td>
<td>6 in a team + 2 Individuals</td>
<td>Top 32/36 competitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 scores to count</td>
<td>U 13 Awards, AA and App</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 sessions</td>
<td>1 or 2 sessions for team (64 athletes)</td>
<td>U 15 Awards, AA and App</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total athletes 256 athletes  Approx. 147 Awards

* 11 sessions is 4 days of competition plus 1 day of podium.

**Levels 8,9,10 there could be insufficient numbers for 2 maximum sessions at each level. Therefore there could be team sessions where the levels are combined. E.g. Level 8 and 9 there are three sessions in total with the same judging panels; one session Level 8, one session Level 9 and one session of combined Level 8 and 9.

***Age groups are approximate and yet to be determined. More analysis needs to be undertaken in this area to clarify this further.
Appendix 2:

WAG Transition from National Levels from Current to New National guidelines / recommendations

Assume that the gymnasts will be placed into the same level as they currently are (i.e. State Level 4 / Level 4 B, National Level 4 = ALL placed into Level 4) UNLESS the Club coach deems this to be not suitable. The decision to move to a different level is the responsibility of the coach - and undertaken when they register the athlete in January 2015. As a general guide, the skill level is approximately 1 level lower in difficulty. If an athlete has competed at an Australian Championships at Level 7 or above it is recommended they should register at the same or higher competition level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Level</th>
<th>New Level</th>
<th>Rationale / guidelines</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 10</td>
<td>National Level 10</td>
<td>Maintain status quo</td>
<td>If competed at Nationals - should remain at Level 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Level 10</td>
<td>National Level 10</td>
<td>If strong competitor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Level 9 (or even 8)</td>
<td>If average / weaker competitor / reduced hours /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 9</td>
<td>National Level 9 or 10</td>
<td>If strong competitor select L 10</td>
<td>If competed at Nationals - should remain at Level 9 or higher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Level 9</td>
<td>National Level 9</td>
<td>If strong competitor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Level 8 (or even 7)</td>
<td>If average / weaker competitor / reduced hours /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 8</td>
<td>National Level 8 or 9</td>
<td>If strong competitor select L 9</td>
<td>If competed at Nationals - should remain at Level 8 or higher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Level 8</td>
<td>National Level 8</td>
<td>If strong competitor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Level 7 (or even 6)</td>
<td>If average / weaker competitor / reduced hours /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>National Level 7 or 8</td>
<td>If strong competitor select L 8</td>
<td>If competed at Nationals - should remain at Level 7 or higher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Level 7</td>
<td>National Level 7</td>
<td>If strong competitor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Level 6 (or even 5)</td>
<td>If average / weaker competitor / reduced hours /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>National Level 6 or 7</td>
<td>If strong competitor select L 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Level 6</td>
<td>National Level 6</td>
<td>If strong competitor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Level 5 (or even 4)</td>
<td>If average / weaker competitor / reduced hours /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>National Level 5 or 6</td>
<td>If strong competitor select L 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Level 5</td>
<td>National Level 5</td>
<td>If strong competitor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Level 4 (or even 3)</td>
<td>If average / weaker competitor / reduced hours /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>National Level 4 or 5</td>
<td>If strong competitor select L 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Level 4</td>
<td>National Level 4</td>
<td>If strong competitor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Level 3</td>
<td>If average / weaker competitor / reduced hours /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>National Level 3 or 4</td>
<td>If strong competitor select L 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Level 3</td>
<td>National Level 3</td>
<td>If strong competitor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Level 2?</td>
<td>If average / weaker competitor / reduced hours /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHO makes the decision?

- The Club coach.
- They have the most knowledge and are best equipped to make the decision.
- When they register for 2015 they change the level accordingly - utilising the guidelines above.
- Qualification / upgrading to a new level - to be determined by the State.
- States can apply a "pass mark" if they wish.

WHEN is the decision made?

- January 2015 by the club coaches.
- Upon registration next year in January.

HOW?

- Assume that the gymnasts will be placed into the same Level as they currently are (i.e. State Level 4 / Level 4 B, National Level 4 = ALL placed into Level 4) UNLESS the Club completes the submission form with Registrations in Jan.
- Should States wish to have prior knowledge to plan events for 2015 then it is suggested they completed a report from iMIS and email WAG Clubs to request 2015 competition level / something similar
- Check to see if the new data base help with this?

HOW to correct incorrect placement?

- Compulsory upgrading for 2016?
- Criteria determined once knowledge of judging rules are complete.
- At State / National Championship events

Other comments

HOW can States accommodate the changes in numbers for 2015?

- The State streams are a State based program and therefore transition should be controlled by the State.
- Providing limited restrictions through the transition phase - particularly in the 1st 6 months will allow the coaches control over the decisions and the flexibility to understand and adapt to the new program with their athletes.
Appendix 3:
Sample Foundation Program – Event resource

Coaches will be able to place the Level 1 skills in the Foundation Program resource tool into a small routine, circuit or activity to suit an event format. New images of each skill to be developed to enable this to link to the WAG manual and the education framework.