



Welsh Gymnastics
Gymnasteg Cymru

Llawlyf Cystadleuaeth
Gymnasteg Rhythmig 2026

Rhythmic Gymnastics Handbook
2026

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Section 1 - Version Control

Version	Summary of Changes	Document Status	Date
1.0	Rhythmic Competition Handbook created	Draft	01/01/2026

The Welsh Gymnastics Rhythmic Gymnastics Technical Panel reserves the right to amend this Handbook.

Notification of a change to the handbook will be communicated through the Welsh Gymnastics website, and an updated version will be available for download at the time of the change.

Where no specific point is addressed in the regulations, the current FIG rules apply. However, Welsh Gymnastics and its appointed officials reserve the right to define any regulation conflict as is deemed appropriate to ensure a fair and equitable competition.

Contacts

- Welsh Gymnastics Competition Team
competitions@welshgymnastics.org
- Welsh Gymnastics Performance Team
performance@welshgymnastics.org
- Rhythmic Technical Discipline Representative Lead – Linda Thomas
- Rhythmic Competition Lead – Eirian Thomas
- Rhythmic Technical Judging Lead – Joanne Coombs

Section 2 - Definition of Terms

Term	Definition
BG	British Gymnastics
Championships	Any Welsh Championship organised by or on behalf of WG
Code / CoP	The Code of Points used for the competition, from which technical information and regulations are taken.
Criminal Record Certificate	DBS (previously CRB)
DJ	Difficulty Judge
Event	A national competition and / or championships organised by or on behalf of WG
FIG	Federation International de Gymnastique
NDP	National Development Plan
Officials	People recruited to assist with the delivery of the overall Event, i.e. Floor Manager, Ceremonies Manager, Spectator Tickets Manager
SJ	Superior Jury
TP	the Rhythmic Gymnastics Technical Panel of WG and/or any Technical Panels appointed from time to time acting with the appropriate delegated authority.
WG	Welsh Gymnastics

Section 3 - Competition Calendars

British National Competition Calendar 2026

Date	Event	Venue
7th – 8th March	Rhythmic British Group Qualification	Northumbria University
25th – 26th April	Open Apparatus Championships	Northumbria University
9th – 10th May	NDP Finals	Northumbria University
17th – 19th July	Rhythmic British Championships	Telford

Welsh National Competition Calendar 2026

Date	Event	Venue	For	Membership
28th Feb – 1st March	Zone B Grades	Sport Wales National Centre	Entry to NDP pathway – gymnasts wishing to qualify for Gold and Diamond level competitions	Silver
6th – 7th June	Welsh Championships	Ebbw Vale Sports Centre	Ruby, Sapphire, Bronze, Silver, Gold, Diamond level gymnasts – 9 in year and older	Silver
5th – 6th December	Cymru Cup	Sport Wales National Centre	Ruby, Sapphire, Bronze, Silver, Gold, Diamond level gymnasts – 9 in year and older	Silver

Section 4 - Age Groups

Gymnasts' ages for entry to all age-dependent categories will be taken as the age of the gymnast on 31st December of the year of competition.

Year of Birth	Age in 2026	Competition Ages	WG Local & Regional Competitions	WG & BG National Competitions	Groups Competitions	
2021 or later	5 or younger	Under 5				
2020	6	Under 6	Hopes 1			
2019	7	Under 7	Hopes 2			
2018	8	Under 8	Aspire			
2017	9	Under 9	Pre-Espoir		Pre-Espoir	
2016	10	Under 10				
2015	11	Under 11	Espoir			Espoir
2014	12	Under 12				
2013	13	Under 13	Pre-Junior			
2012	14	Junior 1	Junior			
2011	15	Junior 2				
2010 or earlier	16+	Senior				

Section 5 - Rhythmic Gymnastics Levels

Competition levels were changed for the 2026 competition season. The following is a basic guide to levels for gymnasts competing in 2026. Gymnasts should compete at the same level throughout 2026.

Development levels 2026

Level	General Description	Membership Level	More detailed description
Emerald	Recreational – was Next Steps	Bronze	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New set routines to be published by British Gymnastics
Ruby	Development level 1	Silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st full year of competition only (Emerald not included) Judged on Basic Code RBDs as per NDP RBDs for development levels Skills presented can also be from CoP values 0.1 and 0.2 only (skills presented over 0.2 value will not be counted)
Sapphire	Development level 2	Silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2nd year of competition onwards (gymnasts may stay at this level throughout their career if appropriate) Judged on Basic Code RBDs as per NDP RBDs for development levels Skills presented can also be from CoP values 0.1, 0.2 and 0.3 only (skills presented over 0.3 value will not be counted)
Bronze	Development level 3	Silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2nd year of competition onwards (gymnasts may stay at this level throughout their career if appropriate) Judged on Basic Code RBDs as per NDP RBDs for development levels Skills presented can also be from CoP with a max value of 0.4 (skills presented over 0.4 value will not be counted) Max 2 Rs per routine

Performance Levels 2026

Level	General Description	Membership level	More detailed description
Silver	Zone	Silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gymnast/group suitable to be judged on FIG Code of Points Individual may have entered Grades but did not qualify for Gold or Diamond level (NB It is not mandatory for individuals wishing to compete at Silver level in 2026 to compete at the Zonal Grades competition) Performance RBDs permitted
Gold	Performance	Silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judged on FIG Code of Points Gymnast / Group entered Grades and qualified to compete at Gold level in 2026 Performance RBDs permitted
Diamond	High Performance	Silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judged on FIG Code of Points Gymnast / Group entered Grades and qualified to compete at Diamond level in 2026 Performance RBDs permitted

A more comprehensive guide to the new levels can be found in the National Development Plan document, issued by British Gymnastics, which can be downloaded [here](#).

Section 6 – General Rules and Penalties

General rules and penalties are as per FIG Code of Points and Welsh Gymnastics membership rules / terms and conditions.

Welsh Championships, Home Nations Championships, and Zonal Grades are governed by FIG rules unless otherwise specified. Please refer to British Gymnastics handbooks for any British Gymnastics competitions.

Competition Attire

For all events held by Welsh Gymnastics, excluding Welsh Championships (Gold and Diamond levels) and Zonal Grades, no attire deductions will be taken.

Appropriate attire for Welsh competitions on top of regular FIG rules:

- Shorts and leggings are accepted, but clothing must be fitted and not restrict the view of the judges.

Length of Exercises

Individuals (all age groups): 1 minute 15 seconds to 1 minute 30 seconds

Groups:

Pre-Espoir and Espoir: 1 minute 45 seconds to 2 minutes

Junior and Senior : 2 minutes 15 seconds to 2 minutes 30 seconds

Section 7 - Judges

For all competitions, clubs must nominate judges in accordance with the following. Clubs that need an appropriately qualified judge should approach someone suitably qualified to judge on their behalf and nominate them at the time of entry. Clubs must check with the judge(s) they are nominating that they are able and willing to judge on their behalf before nominating them.

All nominated judges are expected to be available to judge for the entire competition. This means that if the Event spans more than one day, judges should be prepared to judge on all days whether the nominating club has gymnasts performing on that day or not. Clubs are responsible for all expenses incurred by their nominated judges.

Any clubs entering more than 5 gymnasts must supply a minimum of 2 judges per entry. Clubs in their first year of entering a competition can supply 1 judge. Please see additional criteria relating to specific competitions:

Grades

Judges must hold at least a County qualification. Club judges may be entered in addition but can only be used for line and time.

Welsh Championships

Judges must hold qualifications in line with the below:

Gold / Diamond: minimum 1 judge national

Silver: minimum 1 judge regional

Section 8 - Competition Apparatus

Apparatus for Seniors and Juniors must conform to the relevant FIG Apparatus Norms.

Apparatus for Espoirs and Pre-Espoirs must conform to the FIG Apparatus Norms for Juniors, except for Hoop, which should be appropriate for the size of the gymnast and Ribbon, which should be between four and five metres in length.

A 13-metre x 13-metre rhythmic carpet with a base will be used for all Competitions.

A set of identical apparatus will be placed on two of the four sides of the floor of the arena for use by any gymnast. For Juniors and below, replacement ribbons will be 5 metres in length.

Section 9 – Welsh Gymnastics Competitions 2026

Inclusion of Disability Gymnasts

Welsh Gymnastics is committed to providing inclusive competitive opportunities for all gymnasts. Options for Performance-level disabled gymnasts are as per the BG guidelines, which can be found in the BG competition handbook.

Disability gymnasts at the development level are encouraged to participate fully and may select body difficulties from any level of the RBD document and are not limited to those prescribed for their age group. This flexibility allows for personalised routines that showcase each gymnast's strengths and abilities. Coaches, in consultation with the gymnast and relevant medical/therapeutic professionals (where applicable), are responsible for selecting appropriate difficulties that ensure both challenge and safety.

Clubs with disability gymnasts wishing to compete under these provisions should contact the Competitions Team at competitions@welshgymnastics.org to discuss any additional individual requirements. They will then consult with the Welsh Gymnastics Rhythmic Technical Panel to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place.

Zone B NDP (Grades 1-8)

DATE 28th Feb – 1st March 2026

VENUE Sport Wales National Centre, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, CF11 9SW

ELIGIBILITY The **Grading** event is open to all Zone B gymnasts with Competitive membership. Gymnasts must enter all pieces of apparatus set for their grade.

Disability gymnasts will compete in classification Class 1 – learning disability or Class 2 – physical or sensory disability.

SECTIONS

Mainstream Gymnasts

Category	Grade	Age in year	Year of Birth	Apparatus for Grades
Under 9	8	8-9	2017	Free Hoop
Under 10	7	9-10	2016	Free Ball
Under 11	6	10-11	2015	Ball Clubs
Under 12	5	11-12	2014	Ball Clubs
Under 13 / Pre-Junior	4	12-13	2013	Hoop Clubs
Junior	3	13-14	2012	Hoop Ball Ribbon
Junior	2	14-15	2011	Hoop Ball Ribbon
Senior	1	16+	2010 or earlier	Hoop Ball Clubs

Disability Gymnasts

Category	Grade	Age in year	Year of Birth	Apparatus for Grades
Under 9	8	8-9	2017	Free routine Hoop elements
Under 10	7	9-10	2016	Free routine Ball elements
Under 11	6	10-11	2015	Hoop routine Clubs elements
Under 12	5	11-12	2014	Hoop routine Clubs elements
Under 13 / Pre-Junior	4	12-13	2013	Hoop routine Clubs elements
Junior	3	13-14	2012	2 routines from: Hoop

				Clubs Ball
Junior	2	14-15	2011	2 routines from: Hoop Clubs Ball
Senior	1	15+	2010 or earlier	Hoop Ball Ribbon

Entry will be via the WG Sport80 online entry system:

<https://welshgymnastics.sport80.com/public/wizard/e/264>

RULES, REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

It is **not** mandatory for individuals wishing to compete at Silver level in 2026 to compete at the Zonal Grades competition. However, if a gymnast does compete at the Zonal Grades competition but they do not reach the qualification score for Gold level, then they will must compete at Silver level for the remainder of 2026. There is no requirement for individual gymnasts and groups who were Level 3 in 2025 to compete at Silver level in 2026 – if the coach considers it appropriate for them to move back to Bronze level for 2026 this is acceptable, and they should not enter the Zonal Grades competition. Coaches are encouraged to carefully consider the most appropriate competition pathway for their gymnasts.

For all rules, regulations and competition requirements, plus recommended body elements, please refer to current BG RG Competition Handbook and the NDP Recommended Body Elements for each grade.

AWARDS

Medals will be awarded for the overall 1st, 2nd and 3rd placed gymnast for each grade. No individual apparatus medals will be presented.

CLOSING DATE:

Rhythmic Welsh Championships & Welsh Open 2026

DATE	6th – 7th June 2026 <i>The day and schedule will be released following the entry deadline and will be determined by numbers within each age group.</i>
VENUE	Sport Wales National Centre, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, CF11 9SW
CATEGORIES	Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diamond• Gold• Silver Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bronze• Sapphire• Ruby Disability Development (Class 1 or Class 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bronze• Sapphire• Ruby
AGE GROUPS	Pre-Espoir, Espoir, Pre-Junior, Junior, Senior. <i>Please note that all age groups may be split or combined depending on the numbers entering.</i> <i>This will be done to ensure a fair competition for all age groups and levels of gymnasts.</i>
CLOSING DATE	
ELIGIBILITY	Please note that the process of establishing eligibility for Welsh titles must be started before the closing date. Further information on how to go about this can be found within the Welsh Gymnastics Eligibility Policy found here. (NB: Gymnasts in all levels can choose to compete in 1 or more apparatus; however, Welsh gymnasts in Silver, Gold and Diamond levels who do not compete in all apparatus for their age group will not be eligible for the AA Welsh competition) Entry will be via the Sport80 online entry system. A how-to guide can be found on the Welsh Gymnastics website.

PERFORMANCE

AGE GROUPS

Pre-Espoir, Espoir, Pre-Junior, Junior, Senior

The Junior & Senior competition for Diamond and Gold Gymnasts will be a two-day event – the All-Around and Apparatus finals qualification taking place on Saturday and the Apparatus Finals taking place on Sunday. The top 6 or 8 will qualify for finals – this is dependent on numbers; please note that age groups for finals will depend on the numbers entering.

We reserve the right to split or combine age groups depending on numbers entering to ensure a fair and equitable competition for all gymnasts.

APPARATUS

	Pre-Espoir	Espoir	Pre-Junior	Junior	Senior
Diamond		Ball Clubs Hoop or Ribbon	Hoop Clubs Ribbon	Hoop Ball Clubs Ribbon	Hoop Ball Clubs Ribbon
Gold	Free Hoop or Ball	Ball Clubs	Hoop Clubs	Hoop Clubs	Hoop Ball
Silver				Ribbon	Ribbon

LEVELS

- **Diamond:** gymnasts who have qualified to compete at Diamond level in 2026
- **Gold:** gymnasts who have qualified to compete at Gold level in 2026
- **Silver:** gymnasts for whom FIG CoP is appropriate (may or may not have competed at 2026 grades competition); min level for Home Nation Squad gymnasts

ELIGIBILITY

Closed competition: Any gymnast who has established eligibility as a Welsh gymnast

Open competition: Any invited gymnasts and clubs

MEDALS

Closed competition: Medals will be awarded to the top 3 All-Around (AA) winners at Diamond, Gold and Silver levels. A trophy will be given to the AA winner at each level

Open competition: Medals will be awarded per apparatus to the top 3 gymnasts and ribbons will be awarded to those who place in 4th – 6th place in each category and

age group for Pre-Espoir, Espoir and Pre-Junior gymnasts at Diamond, Gold & Silver levels. They will also be awarded to all age groups in Silver level.

Juniors and Seniors from Gold and Diamond levels will not receive open medals, as the top-scoring gymnasts from these levels will go forward and compete in Apparatus finals.

DEVELOPMENT

AGE GROUPS

Pre-Espoir, Espoir, Pre-Junior, Junior, Senior

We reserve the right to split or combine age groups depending on numbers entering to ensure a fair and equitable competition for all gymnasts.

APPARATUS

	Pre-Espoir	Espoir	Pre-Junior	Junior	Senior
Ruby	Free and/or Ball	Hoop and/or Clubs	Ball and/or Hoop	Hoop and/or Ribbon	Ball and/or Clubs
Sapphire	Ball and/or Hoop	Hoop and/or Ribbon	Hoop and/or Ball	Ball and/or Clubs	Ball and/or Ribbon
Bronze	Ball and/or Hoop	Hoop and/or Ribbon	Hoop and/or Clubs	Ball and/or Clubs	Ball and/or Ribbon

LEVELS

- **Ruby:** Development level 1 - 2026 is first year of competition (competing only in Fundamentals / Next Steps competitions does not count towards years of competition); CoP DBs value 0.2 and below permitted; development RBDs permitted
- **Sapphire:** Development level 2 – 2nd year of competition onwards – Judged on Basic code; CoP DBs value 0.3 and below permitted; development RBDs permitted
- **Bronze:** Development level 3 - progression from Sapphire – Judged on Basic code; CoP DBs value 0.4 and below permitted; development RBDs permitted

ELIGIBILITY

Closed competition: Any gymnast who has established eligibility as a Welsh gymnast

Open competition: Any invited gymnasts and clubs

MEDALS

Closed competition: Medals will be awarded to the top 3 gymnasts and ribbons will be awarded to those placing in 4th – 6th positions in each apparatus and age group. There is no overall award for Development gymnasts.

Open competition: Medals will be awarded per apparatus to the top 3 gymnasts in each category and age group.

NB: If only Welsh gymnasts are competing in any category, open medals will not be awarded.

Cymru Cup

DATE 5th – 6th December, 2026

VENUE Sport Wales National Centre, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, CF11 9SW

CATEGORIES & AGE GROUPS - INDIVIDUALS

YEAR OF BIRTH	CYMRU CUP AGE GROUP					
	Level	Diamond	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Sapphire
2010 OR EARLIER	Senior					
2011	Pre-Senior					
2012	Junior					
2013						
2014	Pre-Junior					
2015	Espoir					
2016						
2017	Pre-Espoir					
2018						

Please note that all age groups may be split or combined depending on the numbers entering. This will be done to ensure a fair competition for gymnasts of all ages and levels

CATEGORIES & AGE GROUPS – GROUPS

Level	Diamond	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Sapphire	Ruby
Age Group						
Pre-Espoir (YoB 2016 – 2018)	Performance Pre-Espoir			Development Pre-Espoir		
Espoir (YoB 2014 – 2016)	Performance Espoir			Development Espoir		
Junior (YoB 2012 – 2013)	Performance Junior			Development Junior		
Senior (YoB 2011 or earlier)	Performance Senior			Development Senior		

CLOSING DATE

Entry will be via the Sport80 online entry system

MEDALS

Medals will be awarded per apparatus to the top 3 gymnasts/groups and ribbons will be awarded per apparatus for gymnasts/groups placing in 4th – 6th position.

APPARATUS – INDIVIDUALS

Levels Silver, Gold & Diamond – Judged on FIG Code of Points			
Category	Year of Birth	Maximum number of routines	Apparatus
Senior	2010 or earlier	3*	Ball Clubs Ribbon
Pre-Senior	2011	3	Ball Clubs Ribbon
Junior	2012 – 2013	3	Hoop Ribbon Clubs
Pre-Junior	2014	3	Hoop Ribbon Clubs
Espoir	2015-2016	2	Ball Clubs
Pre-Espoir	2017-2018	2	Free Ball – 2017 YoB Hoop – 2018 YoB

* 2026 Senior Diamond Level gymnasts may perform 4 apparatus; however, one apparatus score will not count towards the final results. Please liaise with competition lead to organise additional entries

Bronze – Judged on Basic Code			
Category	Year of Birth	Maximum number of routines	Apparatus
Senior	2010 or earlier	2	Ribbon Ball
Pre-Senior	2011	2	Ribbon Ball
Junior	2012 – 2013	2	Ball Clubs
Pre-Junior	2014	2	Hoop Clubs
Espoir	2015-2016	2	Hoop Ribbon
Pre-Espoir	2017-2018	2	Ball Hoop

Sapphire– Judged on Basic Code			
Category	Year of Birth	Maximum number of routines	Apparatus
Senior	2010 or earlier	1	Ribbon / Ball
Pre-Senior	2011	1	Ribbon / Ball
Junior	2012 – 2013	1	Ball / Clubs
Pre-Junior	2014	1	Hoop / Ball
Espoir	2015-2016	1	Hoop / Ribbon
Pre-Espoir	2017-2018	1	Ball / Hoop

Ruby – Judged on Basic Code			
Category	Year of Birth	Maximum number of routines	Apparatus
Senior	2010 or earlier	1	Ball / Clubs
Pre-Senior	2011	1	Ball / Clubs
Junior	2012 – 2013	1	Hoop / Ribbon
Pre-Junior	2014	1	Ball / Hoop
Espoir	2015-2016	1	Hoop / Clubs
Pre-Espoir	2017-2018	1	Free / Ball

APPARATUS – GROUPS

Levels Silver, Gold & Diamond – Performance Groups – Judged on FIG Code of Points			
	Year of Birth	Maximum number of routines	Apparatus
Senior (5 gymnasts)	2010 and older	1 performed twice (best score counts)	3 Hoops / 4 Clubs
Junior (5 gymnasts)	2011-2012	1 performed twice (best score counts)	5 Ropes
Espoir (5, or 6 gymnasts)	2013-2015	1 performed twice (best score counts)	5 Ropes
Pre-Espoir (4, 5 or 6 gymnasts)	2015-2017	1 performed twice (best score counts)	5 Ball

Levels Ruby, Sapphire & Bronze – Development Groups – Judged on Basic Code			
	Year of Birth	Maximum number of routines	Apparatus
Senior (5 gymnasts)	2010 and older	1 performed twice (best score counts)	5 Ribbons
Junior (5 gymnasts)	2011-2012	1 performed twice (best score counts)	5 Hoops
Espoir (4, 5, or 6 gymnasts)	2013-2015	1 performed twice (best score counts)	4, 5, or 6 Ball
Pre-Espoir (4, 5, or 6 gymnasts)	2015-2017	1 performed twice (best score counts)	4, 5, or 6 Hoop

