1. **Why join a swimming club?**

There are many benefits of being a member of a swimming club. They include:

- The opportunity to form long lasting friendships with other swimmers, parents, officials, coaches etc as part of a team, especially at club nights or at other club carnivals, while participating in a sport they enjoy
- Experience all levels of competition - swimmers have the opportunity to attend regular club nights, local competitions, State Championships (including Multi-Class competitions) and National Championships
- The opportunity to be selected in the Junior Excellence Program – recognising athletes from 9 – 13 years who have achieved certain standards
- The opportunity to be selected in the Youth Performance Squad – recognising athletes from 13-16 years who have achieved certain standards and is an extension of the JX Program.

2. **How often are club nights?**

Club nights are conducted once a month. Please refer to the Club website (www.uwaswimmingclub.org) for dates.

3. **How do I know if my child is good enough to join up?**

There is no required minimum standard to join the club. If your child is ready to start racing and want to improve their skills and times, then they are ready to start club swimming. In general, Uniswim tends to recommend the Swimming Club to children once they reach Sub-Junior level. However, Tadpole squad swimmers can certainly benefit from swimming club activities.

4. **How do I know which meets to enter my child?**

The club encourages all swimmers to participate in various swim meets that are held throughout the season. At the beginning of each season, coaches will publish, via club newsletter (the Freestyler) and website, a list of targeted swim meets that swimmers are encouraged to attend. These meets are priority meets and coaches will be present to help you warm up, prepare for competition, and provide feedback at the end of each race. Meet programs are published in the Swimming WA Almanac and on the Swimming WA website.

Please note that a number of meets will have qualifying standards that swimmers have to achieve before they are eligible to enter.

5. **How do you know when the meets are?**

The list of swim competitions is published in the SWA almanac and on SWA website: http://wa.swimming.org.au/

6. **I have never entered my child in a meet, and they really want to start – what is the procedure?**

The first step is to talk to your child’s coach. They will know which meets are coming up and will know if that particular competition is suitable for the current level of your child. Once you are a member of the UWA Uniswim Swimming Club, you are eligible to swim at meets, provided you meet the qualifying standards (if applicable). The next step
is to complete an entry card (manual or online) and submit to the club registrar.

7. Do we need to buy the uniform?

Like most sports, all UWA swimmers are expected to wear their club uniforms when representing the Club at competitions, when travelling or at various events. If you do not have or need new team bathers, please contact Dimitra (uniform@uwaswimmingclub.org).

8. How do I prepare for competitions?

Your coach will carefully plan the training program so that swimmers are ready to compete at particular swim meets throughout the season. At the junior levels, this will include ensuring that swimmers are familiar with the rules of competition and that they have the correct skills in order to race (such as correct starts, turns and finishes). At targeted swim meets, coaches will be present to give guidance, race instructions and encouragement. It is appreciated that parents will not provide race instructions to their children as this may conflict with what the coach has been working on. Parents are welcome to give positive feedback and support, but please leave coaching advice to the coaches!

9. What can I expect at competitions?

At competitions, your coach will advise what time you are expected to be at the pool (please be punctual). There will be a period of time for stretching and warm-ups in the competition pool prior to the start of a swim meet. This will enable a swimmer to complete a warm up, get familiar with the pool and starting blocks, and get ready to race. The coach will conduct this warm up.

Parents and families are encouraged to sit in the stands and support their child with positive encouragement, a warm towel, and some healthy snacks for between races. Parents will also be required to assist with time keeping duties and other volunteer tasks throughout the meet.

Swimmers must be aware of their event numbers (some children write these on their hands with a texter) and be ready to “marshal” for their event. See your coach before going to the marshalling area. The marshalling area will be easily identified. If in doubt, talk with your coach. Take your club cap and racing goggles to the marshalling area and keep warm. An official will marshal you into your correct lane. After your race, see your coach for post-race analysis and feedback. Once you have spoken to your coach, you are welcome to chat and get hugs from mum and dad, aunties and uncles, and grandma!

10. What if I also play another sport?

It is certainly OK to compete in a variety of sports as a young child. In fact, swim coaches see the benefits of participating in numerous sports and activities as a pre-teen as this helps with the development of general fitness, coordination and skill acquisition.

By the age of 13-14 years however, if you want to be serious about swimming and achieve at the highest level, it is recommended that you specialise in just swimming and perhaps one other complementary activity (such as surf club, water polo, triathlon etc). This is due to the rigorous demands of training for swimming and competing at the National Level. The High Performance Squads are designed for these serious swimmers and therefore will have minimum attendance standards.

Uniswim does also cater for more recreational swimmers through the TeenFit Squads where you may elect to swim only a few times per week and participate in a variety of other activities.