



Synchronized Skating Judge Manual

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Many thanks for the contributors of previous judge training manuals.

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Introduction

Welcome to Figure Skating Officiating in Canada

Welcome to the world of judging! We are very pleased that you have chosen to pursue officiating as an extension of your own skating experiences. We hope that you will find this a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

This synchronized skating judge manual is designed to present to you some of the important things to know as you begin judging at all levels. For those just starting out at the Novice level, this manual will walk you through some of the “first” experiences you will encounter in your new role. We hope that by reading these first, you will be more comfortable when you attend your first competition as an official. As we are sure you remember from your early days as a skater, a first competition can be a very frightening and overwhelming experience. As you begin to judge at the Novice level, part of your job is to strive to make early competitive experiences enjoyable and positive for all skaters. In this way, it is hoped that skaters will be encouraged to continue skating and competing. Moving towards Junior and Senior promotions provides each judge with more opportunities to provide teams with feedback and teams with more in-depth feedback, further enhancing the abilities of the skaters to reach their personal goals.

Officials not only play an important role in determining the outcome of a competition, but also play a role in determining the atmosphere of the day. Officials should try to create a relaxed atmosphere, yet recognize that for the coaches, teams and their parents, these competitions can seem as important as the Olympics. Being relaxed and at ease can be particularly challenging when you yourself are also nervous. Hopefully, after attending this clinic and reading this manual, you will feel completely comfortable as you begin judging. Rules continue to change year to year and it is up to each official to keep themselves up to date at all times. Finally, remember that it is important that you encourage all enthusiastic young skaters to be the best they can be. Constructive feedback and positive words from judges like you are vitally important in this process.

Skate Canada would like to thank you for volunteering your time so that teams may continue to have the satisfaction of participating in skating - be it for fun, fitness or achievement of their goals.

CPC System and Overview of Officials

Skate Canada's Cumulative Points Calculation (CPC) System is sometimes referred to as the New Judging System as it has replaced the previous 6.0 system. It is identical to the ISU judging system, which was initially developed for Junior and Senior levels. However, the CPC system allows Skate Canada to support all the levels of skating that occur domestically. This clinic has been designed to give you the knowledge and skills you need to judge a competition using the CPC judging system. You will be given numerous opportunities to practice judging with the CPC system during the clinic, but it is imperative to continue this learning process through self-study

and ongoing practice. Throughout the clinic, learning is reinforced through practical exercises and trial judging opportunities.

There are many different Officials in the CPC judging system including the Technical Controller, Technical Specialists, Data Input Operator, Referees and Judges. The number of people filling these roles may vary depending on the size of the competition. For example, you no longer require an odd number of judges to form a panel and some competitions may use paper instead of computers and video. A more detailed description of the CPC Officials and their duties:

Technical Panel

Technical Controller (TC): supervises the Technical Specialists and the Data Operator and proposes corrections if necessary. Responsible to verify that the performed elements and levels of difficulty meet the well balanced program requirements before the Data Operator finalizes them. In the case of a disagreement regarding levels of elements the TC will assist with the decision.

Technical Specialist (TS): identifies and calls the performed elements and the levels of difficulty as well as falls and illegal elements.

Assistant Technical Specialist (ATS): sets up the upcoming elements for the TS from the planned program sheet and calls review if questioning any calls for element levels

Judging Panel

Referee: Is ultimately responsible for running each event on time with the schedule. They are also responsible for the skaters and the timing of the programs during the competitions. The referee may also award marks and/or take deductions. They can stop the program if any falls occur that represent a danger to the skaters and will deal with any disruptions, complaints and discrepancies as they relate to the event. The referee is the individual to discuss any concerns or questions that you have as they relate to the rules and their interpretation or application.

Referee's Assistant at Ice Level (IL): Unique to synchronized skating is the IL referee. This individual is an experienced official who is responsible for permitting teams onto the ice, ensuring teams are available for their warm up and assisting the Referee in monitoring the ice conditions during competition to ensure the safety of the skaters. If a foreign object or part of a costume drops to the ice during the competition, the IL may direct a registered alternate to enter the ice for the express purpose of picking up the object. The coach and at least one alternate on the team are required to stand close to the IL at the entrance to the ice. Unlike the other officials of the event, the Ice Level Referee need only be a qualified official of Skate Canada, they are not required to be qualified to officiate (i.e. judge or referee) the event. Nationally, the Ice Level Referee may be identified as an official part of the officials' panel, whereas Internationally, the Ice Level Referee is a volunteer position.

Judge: responsible for watching the program and awarding Grades of Execution (GOE) and Program Components (PC) for each team.

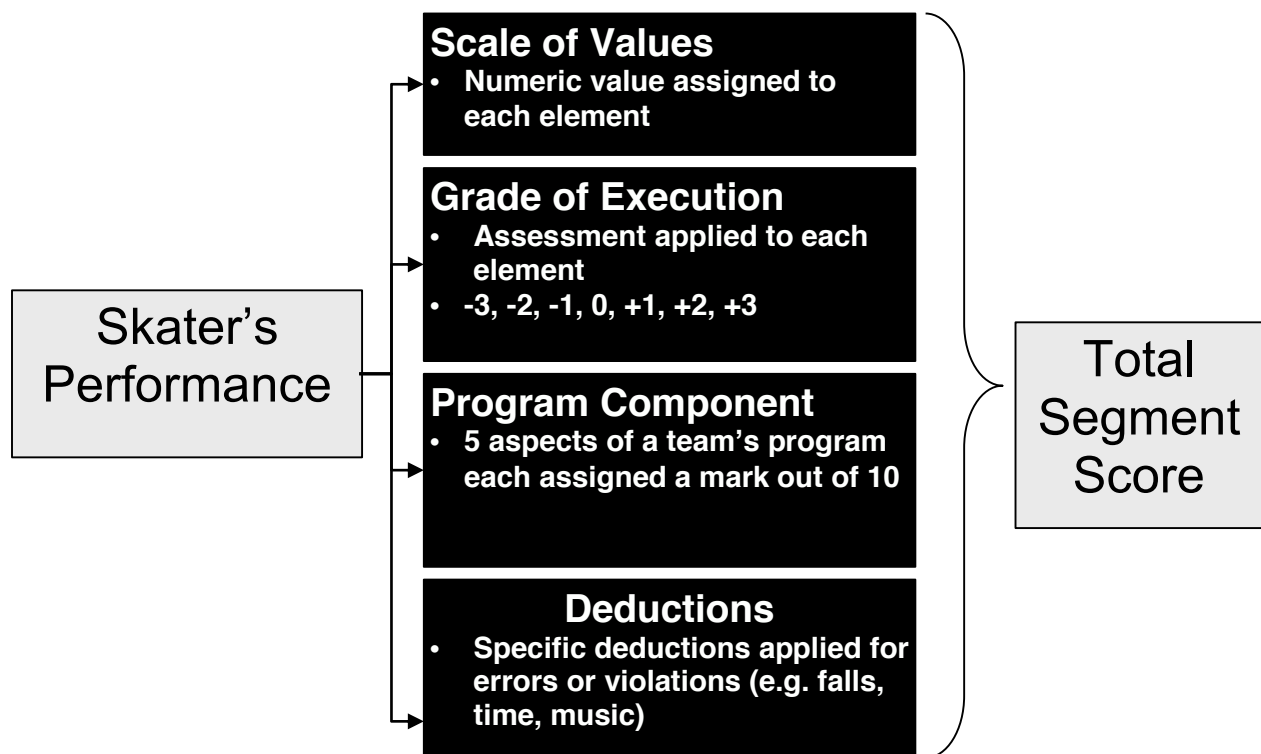
Other Officials

Data Specialist: responsible for collecting the data from the Judges, Referee and Technical Panel and producing the detailed event results.

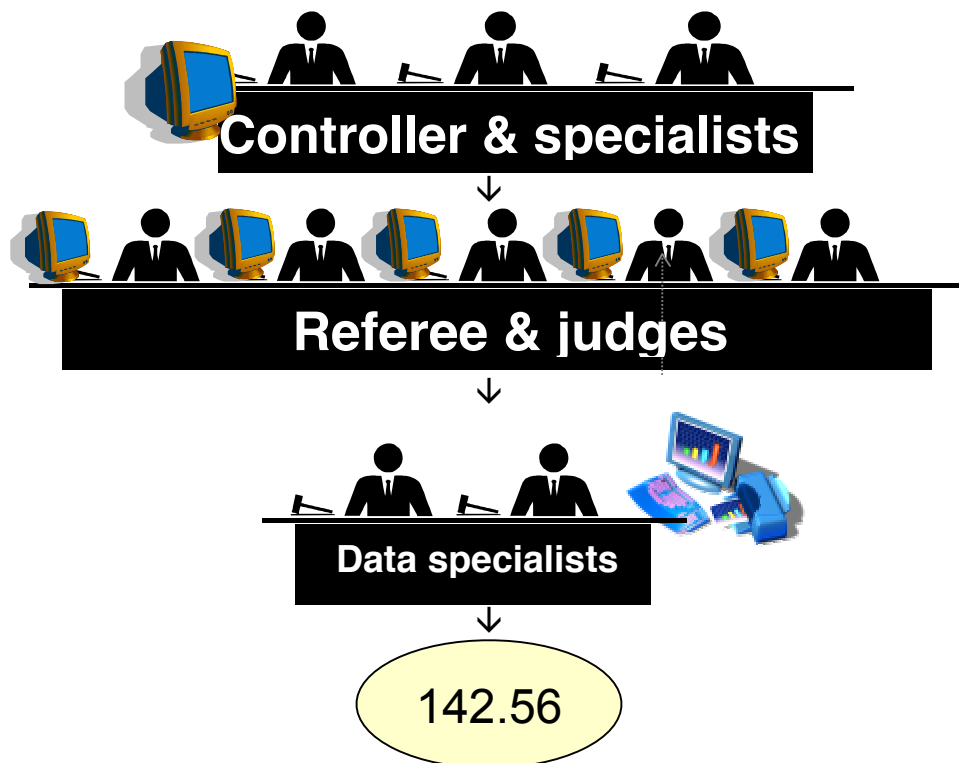
Data Input Operator: inputs the called elements and levels of difficulty as well as falls and illegal elements. (Not an actual “official” but plays a role on the panel.)

Video Replay Operator: records each element separately using a digital playback system to enable the Technical Panel (and Referee, when so equipped) to review the element when necessary. (Not an actual “official” but plays a role on the panel.)

How CPC works



Summary/Overview of CPC Scoring System



- The elements a skater performs have a base value on the scale of values (SOV) and are identified by the Technical Team (i.e. Controller and Specialists)
- Judges apply a grade of execution (GOE) based on how well the element was performed as well as five Program Component marks
- The Referee, Judges and Technical Panel apply deductions where appropriate

All of these aspects are calculated and together comprise the total segment score for the team's program. Teams receive a numeric score for each element in their program and for the five program components.

With the CPC system, teams receive a great deal of quantitative information regarding their performance that helps them identify their relative strengths and those areas where they need to improve. This is provided to the teams through the publication and distribution of team detail sheets, or team detail sheets by official, with every element and level that was called as well as their five program component scores. Teams and coaches can then review their own performance in detail and can work for their personal best.

Overview of Synchronized Skating Categories

Skate Canada has developed a model of synchronized skating categories to fit into the Long Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD) developed by Sport Canada. Below is a table that describes the old and new categories.

Level	Past Category	New Category
Learn to Train	CanSkate (Snowball) Pre-Juvenile Festival Juvenile Festival Pre-Novice	Beginner I Beginner II Elementary Juvenile Pre-Novice
Learn to Compete	Festival Junior Competitive Novice Festival Novice Festival Open Competitive Adult Festival Adult	Novice Intermediate Open
Train to Compete	Competitive Junior Competitive Senior	Junior Senior
Learn/Live to Win	N/A	Structure to be determined
Active for Life	Festival Masters Festival Adult	Adult I Adult II Adult III

Judging Qualifications

These judging qualifications apply for synchronized skating only. Your level of judging is considered separate for each discipline. For example, as a Novice synchronized skating judge, you can judge Novice and Adult synchronized skating events, but cannot judge Novice singles events.

Categories	Types of competition				
	Club	Invitational	Regional	Nationals	Adult Nationals
Beginner I	Novice	Novice			
Beginner II	Novice	Novice	Novice		
Elementary Juvenile Pre-Novice	Novice	Novice	Novice with simple majority Senior and Canadian level		
Novice	Novice	Novice	Novice, with simple majority Senior and Canadian level	Canadian	
Intermediate Junior	Junior	Junior	Junior, with simple majority Senior and Canadian level	Canadian	
Open	Junior/ Senior	Junior/Senior	Senior, with Simple majority Canadian level	Canadian	
Senior	Senior	Senior	Senior, with Simple majority Canadian level	Canadian	
Adult Class I Adult Class II Adult Class III	Novice	Novice	Novice with simple majority Senior and Canadian level		Novice, with simple majority Senior and Canadian level

In instances where a simple majority is not achievable, permission must be sought from Skate Canada to have judging panels that do not meet the basic requirements.

Roles and Responsibilities as a Judge

Being a judge involves a great deal of responsibility. You are the person who has to decide the mark the team has earned based on the performance of that day. It is a job which can be very rewarding but one which must be taken seriously. As a judge you are responsible for many tasks at every competition you officiate. These include some or all of the following:

1. Know the rules and how to locate them in the Skate Canada Rule Book
2. Officiate in a professional and non-bias manner within the rules of Skate Canada
3. Know the judging standards and required elements each program as well as the basic requirements of each element.
4. Communicate effectively with the other figure skating stakeholders
5. Handle problem situations that may arise

Information regarding all of the things you need to know to be an effective judge is outlined in this manual and the Skate Canada Rulebook. Knowledge is the first step. However, to be able to actually perform all of the duties of a judge will take practice.

The CPC Judging System stresses the importance of assessing the quality of each element and of the entire team's performance based on a published set of standards. You need to be able to write comments and discuss your rationale of how the team performed.

You are training to be an official of Skate Canada, therefore, your conduct should always be appropriate to this responsible position.

Know the Rules

As a judge at a competition, it is absolutely essential that you are fully aware of the Skate Canada rules. All of your actions at competitions must be within the rules of the association.

Each year following the Annual Convention and General Meeting (ACGM), Skate Canada issues a new revised Rulebook that has been updated with any changes from the ACGM. This is available on Skate Canada's info centre (info.skatecanada.ca). As well, the International Skating Union (ISU) regularly publishes communications updating the standards and policies to be used for that skating season (www.isu.org). You should review the rules, regulations and policies before officiating at a competition – ensuring that you will be prepared to make decisions as required.

In addition to these specific regulations, there are restrictions on the activities of officials. Please review Rule 2502 in the Skate Canada Rulebook to ensure that these restrictions do not apply to you in any case where you are to officiate.

Officiate in a professional and non-bias manner

The role of a judge is to assess the elements and programs skated and to assess them according to execution charts and program component descriptions as provided by the ISU in a professional and non-biased manner. It is important to remember that each element and each team are independent of each other and should be marked as such. Reputation and previous performances do not and should not influence marks awarded. It may be difficult at first, but as a judge it is important to separate one's self from the competition "moment" and to reflect on what was actually executed on the ice.

Know the Standards

The basic requirements for each element and the required elements for each level of synchronized skating will be outlined in the technical module of this manual. Please refer to the current ISU Communications for the specific standards for the assignment of the GOEs and PC marks (See Appendix B). It is important that you familiarize yourself with these standards and refer to them often.

Communicate effectively with other figure skating stakeholders

An important part of the officiating is effective communication. There are four basic communication skills that make up effective communication: Speaking; Listening; Giving Feedback; Receiving Feedback. As judges one needs to be able to explain rationale and to discuss the marks assigned and to listen to what others say as every situation is a learning situation. An integral part of a judge's development is the giving and receiving of feedback. Judges must be able to communicate effectively in order to provide useful feedback to each other and with the teams and their coaches. Feedback can often become one of the most meaningful learning experiences, when given in a positive, constructive manner.

Handling problem situations

There are many different situations that can arise in a competition that judges must be prepared to deal with. In all cases, it is always important to keep the best interest of the teams in mind, and when making any decisions that affect the competition, you should always consult with the referee and ensure everyone is informed of what is happening.

Official's Code of Ethics

For the past several years, Skate Canada has formalized the working relationship of various partners in the Association to the organization as a whole through the development and implementation of “code of ethics” specific to each group. Codes of Ethics are like position descriptions that outline the responsibilities of the partner to the organization in which they are involved. In general, the code of ethics outlines standards of conduct in three primary areas: technical competence, loyalty to the Association and faithfulness to the organization’s mission and policies. This document has been thoroughly researched, and has been approved by the Association’s lawyer as assurance of its validity.

According to Skate Canada policy, members wishing to hold the designation as “official” are required to acknowledge in writing that he or she has received and reviewed a current copy of the Code of Ethics (and any applicable addendum) and that he or she agrees to be bound by and comply with it in day to day functions as a Skate Canada Official. This acknowledgement must be completed every membership year in order to maintain designation as an official. Note that because this acknowledgement is required to maintain credentials as an official it is a condition of participating in any test or competition assignments on behalf of Skate Canada.

The link to the current version of the Code of Ethics has been included (Appendix B). If you have not already done so, please read the document, sign the agreement and acknowledgement form and forward it to your Section Judges Chair.

Your First Competition

Many of you will remember what steps you go through as a competitor, arriving at the arena on the day of a competition. From organizing your skating bag at home, to handing in your music and getting dressed, there are a lot of things to think about on competition day. Similarly in judging, there are several things to think about and prepare before and after you arrive at the rink to judge a competition.

First, we will assume that you have been contacted by a Technical Representative to judge at a competition. You may not be familiar with this role at a competition, but the Technical Representative or “Tech Rep” is vitally important to any competition. It is their responsibility to create the schedule for the competition, recruit and schedule Officials including Judges, Referees and the Technical Panel, and to be on hand the day of the competition to make sure everything runs smoothly and on-time. When a Tech Rep calls you, try to make yourself available for as much of the day as possible. It is much easier to schedule a Judge who is available from 9 am to 4 pm than a Judge who is available from 11 am to 1 pm. The shorter the time you are available, the fewer events you will be able to judge. Also, unless you are ill or have a family emergency, do not cancel once you have committed to judge. It is extremely difficult to change the judging schedule at the last minute and other Judges will have to work harder to cover your events. This is not fair for the Tech Rep, the other Judges or the Skaters in

the competition. However, times do arise where you may need to change your availability for a competition. When this occurs, it is your responsibility to inform the Tech Rep as soon as possible, allowing them sufficient time to replace you at the competition. If you have any conflicts such as family members on a Skating Team please let the Tech Rep know as soon as possible so that this can be considered when making up the panels.

Prior to each competition, the Tech Rep will circulate the X&O schedule that will indicate which events you are assigned to and in what role. It is your responsibility to check your assignment for any personal conflicts, time conflicts, or mistakes (i.e. being assigned to an event you are not qualified to officiate) and communicate any concerns to the Tech Rep ASAP. There are often many changes to the X&O schedule prior to the start of the competition so ensure that you double check your final schedule when you arrive at the rink. If you need to be on specific events for promotion, please feel free to make those requests to the Tech Rep. But please note that any changes to your schedule of event assignments must be approved in advance by the Tech Rep.

Once you have agreed to judge the competition, be sure that you know the following information: Where is the rink located? How long will it take you to drive there? What time will you start judging? Will there be a meeting prior to the start of the competition and is there any new information I should be aware of. It is wise to plan to arrive at the arena at least 30 - 60 minutes before you are scheduled to judge. This allows you time to find your way around the arena and provides some leeway in unexpected circumstances such as traffic delays or becoming lost. In addition, this time will allow time for preparation before you judge the first event of the day. You should also try to make sure that you will not have to rush away at the end of your scheduled judging time. Sometimes there are unavoidable delays and competitions run late.

Arrival at the arena

When you first arrive at the arena, you should find the competition Registration Desk. There is often a list of Officials and you may need to sign in to let organizers know you have arrived. The Volunteers at Registration may also issue you an Officials' badge that will control your access to certain parts of the building. It is important that you wear your badge at all times, especially if spectators are charged admission. Finally, the Volunteers at Registration should also be able to direct you to the Judge's room, if you do not already know where it is located.

After you have found the Judge's room, let the Tech Rep know that you have arrived. If you do not know the other Judges, ask the Tech Rep to introduce you. It is generally assumed that all Judges know each other, which, of course, is not always the case. If you were issued a revised schedule or judging assignment sheet, you should review it to see if there have been any changes to your schedule. If you are not familiar with the layout of the building, you may also want to take a few minutes to locate areas of importance such as where you will eat your meals, the washrooms, how to get to the ice, etc.

On The Panel

Remember that at all times you are representing Skate Canada. Skate Canada Officials are expected to demonstrate professionalism at all times. The dress code for attending practices and at all times in the arena and on the judges stand is business or business casual.

A positive and constructive attitude is expected when interacting with all fellow officials, skaters, coaches and volunteers. Please remember that although you are watching the teams you are also being observed at all times. Your job is to observe the teams and input marks, and reductions. Keep conversations to a minimum as what may be a simple comment could be perceived as discussing and comparing to a skater, coach or spectator.

Some competitions have practices prior to the start of the competition. Remember that in practices, judges should not take notes, merely observe the skating on the ice. Discussion regarding the skating on the ice should be kept to a minimum. For each judge, there are both positive and negative aspects to watching practices. While they assist judges in re-familiarizing themselves with the elements and requirements of the level of skating, practices introduce several forms of bias. It is important that each judge consider both positive and negative reasons and develop strategies to address any potential biases.

Before you head to the Judges Stand ensure that you have all your necessary supplies including pencils and paperwork allowed on the panel. Paperwork such as ISU or SC documents should be limited as shuffling through papers during an event is distracting and unprofessional. The Referee or Tech Rep may provide you with the planned program sheets prior to each event. If these sheets are not available, your referee will discuss the plan for that panel prior to the event. Ensure that you are recording on these sheets as well as on the computer as computers have been known to have technical problems. It is not unusual to have to resubmit all of your marks due to a technical problem (GOEs and PCs) and thus they must be recorded on your paperwork. Enter your marks as efficiently as possible as there is a limited time for the technical and judging panel to determine marks for each team. It is your responsibility as an official to ensure all of your marks are correct and complete BEFORE pushing the submit button. Once you have finished inputting all of your marks you should move to the next team's planned program sheet and not refer again to your previous marks. Always award GOEs and PCs according to the GOE and PC criteria instead of "comparing" teams in an event.

Each event you judge will also have a Referee. The Referee is usually a more experienced Judge who is in charge of ensuring that the event runs smoothly. They are the ones who communicate with Skaters and make decisions during the event, if necessary. Do not hesitate to ask your Referee if something is unclear or if you are experiencing any technical difficulties. The more experienced Judges have all been in your shoes before. They still remember their first competition and will be glad to help you.

You did it! There are just a few things to remember about the end of a competition day. First, you should look at the results of all of the events that you judged. This is useful to review your performance compared to your colleagues. Although you cannot change the results, you may

be able to talk to the other Judges and hear why they scored the Skaters differently. This type of conversation can always be useful and more experienced Judges are usually willing to answer any questions you might have, or hear why your marks were a little different. The goal is not to see if you were “right” but to work on your abilities to relate your observations into concrete scores. But please remember to keep conversations regarding the events themselves, especially in cases where the event is a combined event with the same judging panel (i.e. Junior and Senior events) to a minimum once the event has been completed. Each event should be viewed as a separate event.

Finally, you may be approached by Coaches, Managers or Skaters regarding the scores on their report cards. To ensure a unified approach to feedback, refer any individuals who may require assistance or further detail to either the Referee or Technical Controller of the event. Providing simple answers such as what a symbol or abbreviation means is a courteous gesture but gently redirecting more detailed questions to the Referee or Technical Controller will provide a more consistent outcome.

Officials’ Stand Guidelines – National/International events

The officials’ stand is one of the most controlled areas at a figure skating event to protect the competitive environment. Access is restricted to those **required to be there** for their tasks. Our professional image as an organization is represented by both our conduct and appearance so the following decorum and dress code must be adhered to by staff, volunteers, consultants, and contractors while on duty. On duty is defined as once the event has begun, including warm-ups and practices.

Decorum

- Access should be made during breaks in skating only (never impede the view or concentration of officials or others working on the officials’ stands).
- Display a high standard of behaviour, aware that all of your actions are highly visible.
- In-depth discussions should take place off of the officials’ stand.
- You are an objective party at the event so preferential treatment (i.e. applause) is not permitted.
- No electronic devices are permitted (includes cell phones, ipads, and cameras) while sitting on panel (this includes during flood breaks).
- Beverages and food are not permitted (small snacks are allowed with discretion).
- Bottled water (unlabeled) is permitted and must be placed on the floor.
- Do not chew gum.

Dress Code

- Business casual attire is ordinarily required at the rink.
- Business casual attire does not include: jeans (all colours), sweatshirts, t-shirts with logos, very short skirts and dresses, sweat pants or leggings.
- Those at rinkside should wear dark clothing especially for televised events.

- Rinkside positions may be very cold so dressing in layers is recommended.
- *Event volunteer positions on the officials' stand (timers, DVD labellers, etc.) may wear their event specific gear.

Expectations of Officials

Developmental Priorities of Competitive Judging

The chart below graphically shows the areas of focus for each level of Judge. The red boxes indicate the areas where the Judge is expected to demonstrate competency, the green boxes indicate areas of developing competencies, and the blue areas indicate areas that are assessed but are not of primary focus.

	Assessment	Communication	Deportment	Leadership
Novice				
Junior/Senior				
Canadian				
International/ISU				

Just as the expectations of skating quality increase as a skater moves from Novice to Junior/Senior, so to do the expectations of the Officials who assess them. There are four main areas for which an Official is assessed: Assessment, Communication, Deportment, and Leadership. In the process of becoming a Novice Judge, assessment is mainly on your abilities in the Assessment and Communication categories; however, at the Junior and Senior levels, it is expected that you are able to accurately assess the skating you see. As such, at the Junior and Senior levels there are additional expectations with Communication and Deportment.

Assessment Skills - Fundamental

Assessment skills are being developed at the Novice Level but are fundamental to being a Junior/Senior Level Judge. There is an expectation that at the Junior/Senior Level you will be able to demonstrate stronger technical knowledge and more objective and decisive decision-making. Knowledge of the current rules and trends and effective use of the GOE and Program Component range are imperative at the Senior level. The Junior/Senior levels have the addition of elements that were not seen at the Novice level. As well, there is the addition of the short program and the rules and GOE reductions specific to them. With the improvement of skating skills at the Junior/Senior level there will be more opportunity and expectations for you as a judge to demonstrate the integration of quality into your assessment. At the lower levels, teams often skate with similar skating quality and with similar quality between the five program components. However, at the Junior/Senior level, you will see teams who demonstrate strength in one area but who may be struggling in another. This provides an opportunity for you as a judge, to use the full range of GOE and Program Components.

Communication Skills - Being Part of the Team

Communication skills are imperative in being part of the team. At the Novice level, you are developing your skills as a Communicator through the development of short hand in making notations on your JPRs and through communicating with fellow figure skating stakeholders. At the Junior/Senior level you should be able to build upon the skills you have developed while working towards your Novice promotion. There are three main areas of communication for which you should focus on: Interpersonal, Written, and Oral Communication.

Interpersonal Communication

- Remaining open minded to the opinions of others
- Continuously evaluate yourself to assist in further improvement of skills

Written communication

- Quality of note taking on JPRs to adequately explain rationale
- Communication between yourself and various Figure Skating Stakeholders

Oral communication

- The ability of effectively express your reasoning and rationale
- Participation in discussions both formal and informal
- Effective and positive communication with athletes, coaches, and other stakeholders

Deportment - Mutual Respect

Deportment is a new area of focus at the Junior/Senior Level. While it was assessed at the Novice there is a stronger emphasis on your demeanor, conduct and behaviour at the Junior and Senior levels. Within this competency, you will be assessed on your respect for Athletes, Officials, and all Skating Stakeholders, support and respect for fellow Officials, your ability to manage stress, and your organization at competitions. Remember, the role of an Official does not end the minute you leave the rink; one needs to ensure they maintain appropriate professionalism within and outside of the arena. Don't forget, that in this new age of social media, everything you do and say reflects yourself as an Official of Skate Canada.

Leadership - Being a role model

Leadership is a competency that is introduced at the Junior/Senior level. At the Novice level, others were providing you support, words of encouragement, or assisting you in developing your judging skills. Now at the Junior/Senior level, you are that person who is the role model for new up-and-coming Judges. As a leader you are expected to show commitment to work at competitions and to be a representative of figure skating, your section, and of Skate Canada. Thus, it is imperative that you act appropriate in all situations, both in and outside of the rink. As a role model for others you will be expected to actively participate in mentoring and monitoring, both formally and informally, and to effectively contribute to the direction of the sport. Remember, we're here for the athletes and it is our role as officials to provide the best environment for each and every skater and team to achieve their personal goals!

Secrets for Finding Success and Happiness in Judging

- ☐ Walk in the rink happy.

"Optimism is a learned attitude. If you start thinking positively early in the day, you're more likely to maintain a positive stance as your day progresses."

- ☐ Start your day with positive self-talk.

"The role of positive self-dialogue in maintaining a positive attitude has been well-documented. And it's been found to be most effective if you put it in the present tense."

- ☐ Always greet your Colleagues, Coaches and Skaters with a smile.

"As simple as it sounds, a smile establishes your own self-worth and shares it with others."

- ☐ Turn your dilemmas into opportunities.

To do so, examine your most pressing problems at the event. Then, to gain a better perspective, come up with solutions as if you were advising one of your best friends.

- ☐ Stay away from pity parties or gripe sessions.

Joining in may feel like worker solidarity, but it's actually climbing aboard a sinking ship. Instead, find happy and successful role models to pattern yourself after. Surround yourself with people who enjoy their work judging and love skating.

- ☐ View change as normal.

Constantly monitor and evaluate your capacity to be flexible, open to new ideas and adaptable to change.

- ☐ Don't let trifles bother you.

"If the effort it takes to change something far exceeds its worth, forget it and learn to live with it. Keep your mind free to concentrate on larger issues and problems."

- ☐ Don't make too much of your mistakes.

They are part of being human. Concentrate on the lessons to be learned from even the most trying confrontations.

- ☐ Set your own standards rather than comparing yourself to others.

Successful people run their own races.

- ☐ Appreciate each moment of your day in the rink.

Regardless of the level of performance – remember the Skaters/Teams, the work and the passion the Athletes must have – and feel privileged to share in their growth (regardless of the assessment you must make)

- ☐ Discover a sense of purpose.

Knowing why you want what you want makes the difference between success and failure, happiness and unhappiness, joy and frustration.

- ☐ Expect the best from others-Judges, Coaches, and Skaters!!

Be a leader in spreading encouragement and praise. You'll be surprised how people will live up to what you expect when you share your positive expectations.

Determining the Grade of Execution (GOE)

References:

- Current ISU Communications
- ISU Special Regulations and Technical Rules
- Skate Canada Synchronized Skating Technical Requirements
- Skate Canada & ISU Summary of Calls

The final GOE of a performed element is based on the combination of both positive and negative aspects, and is calculated considering first the positive aspects of the element that result in the starting GOE. Following this, the Judge reduces the GOE according to the published ISU guidelines of possible errors and GOE reductions. The result is one GOE for each element.

We will go through each element and the criteria and reductions in the following section. Many elements are grouped together with similar positive GOE criteria and will be grouped together for discussion. Each element does have specific additional features that are unique to each element.

Well Balanced Program

The Well Balanced Program for Synchronized Skating consists of required elements, their basic requirements, features and additional features and as well as transitions which can be included to complete the choreography. Each of the required elements is assigned a Grade of Execution or GOE by the Judging panel. Transitions are evaluated in the Component Scores along with Skating Skills, Performance/Execution, Choreography/Composition and Interpretation.

Please refer to the Well Balanced Program Guidelines as outlined by the ISU and Skate Canada. Please refer to Appendix B for the list of current documents and how to access them.

The **Planned Program Sheet (PPS)** for Synchronized Skating is very important. This is how Teams indicate to the Technical Panel and the Judges, which elements they want to have counted and assigned a GOE, and which elements are included as Transitions or Choreographic Components. All elements must be listed.

Elements

When the Technical Panel identifies an element that must receive a GOE, it is your job as a Judge to assign the GOE. As a Judge you do not have to know all the details of how the elements will be called by the Technical Panel or how the base value varies with each feature and/or additional feature. However, you do have to be aware of the calling specifications and basic requirements of each element to know when an element is considered to start and end as well as the specific features of each element because they are considered in assigning the Grade of Execution or GOE.

We will go through each element one at a time, first describing the calling specifications and the basic requirements required for an element to be called, and then the positive GOE criteria and associated specific GOE reductions. Please refer to the ISU Special Regulations and Technical Rules, Skate Canada Summary of Calls and relevant ISU Communications for further technical information, calling specifications and basic requirements.

Program Components

There are five Program Components (Skating Skills, Transitions, Performance/Execution, Choreography, and Interpretation) that are marked on an absolute scale from 0 to 10 in 0.25 increments. The absolute scale means that marks should be applied in a consistent manner regardless of the specific level of the Team. To assist you in the process of assigning a numerical value to each Component, the following words are associated with each level:

Component Mark:	Description:
Less than 1	Extremely Poor
1	Very Poor
2	Poor
3	Weak
4	Fair
5	Average
6	Above Average
7	Good
8	Very Good
9	Superior
10	Outstanding

Refer to Appendix B for links to the ISU documents: Program Components Overview and Components with Explanations

Videos

Skate Canada in partnership with the ISU has put together a set of self-study Program Component DVD's. This set of 7 DVD's is a comprehensive review of the five Program Component marks. Each section has a copy and you are encouraged to borrow these DVD's and review them at your own pace. The following component descriptions are taken from the DVDs.

Transitions (“Connection”)

What are transitions? Transitions are often considered to be most challenging of the Program Components to grasp and understand. In general, transitions include everything that is not called as an element in a program. This includes connecting movements within elements as well as all entry and exits of elements.

There are four categories of Transitional Tools:

1. Footwork - steps, turns, directions of skating
2. Skating Movements - spread eagles, Ina Bauer, pivot, hydroblading, spirals, lunges, arabesque etc.
3. Body Movement - arms (fingers, wrists, elbows), head (eyes, mouth, face), torso (hips), legs (ankle, knee)
4. Non Listed Element - all jumping elements that do not have an assigned value, such as axel, flip jump, etc. These include such jumps as hops, mazurkas, split jumps, falling leaves.

In determining the Transition mark, consider the use of the transitional tools within the transition criteria:

- Variety - use of different transitional tools and variety of holds
- Difficulty of the transitional tools - combinations of the tools
- Intricacy - technical elements become woven (not just cross overs or long pauses between elements), seamless transition in/out and between the elements.
- Quality - cleanness and clarity of transitional tools with the music chosen including unison and quality of edges.

Skating Skills (“Balance”)

Skating skills is the assessment of how the team moves across the ice and the way the blade touches or moves across the ice. Skating skills are the foundation to our sport.

Skating Skills are assessed using five criteria:

1. Balance - the balance on the blade, rhythmic knee action, and precision of foot placement. Skating should be quiet and on clean edges.
2. Flow - good flow results in effortless movement, otherwise known as glide, across the ice.
3. Sureness of deep edges, turns and steps - is related to balance and results in security and confidence in skating
4. Speed - variance of power and energy to create speed and acceleration. Good skating is developed from how one derives and maintains speed.
5. Direction - the use of multidirectional skating with ease of acceleration.

Choreography (“Design”)

Choreography is an idea that is communicated through movement, pattern, and music. The idea is also communicated through the relationship between and among skaters on a Team. The importance is the conception of the whole rather than each single movement. It is the design of everything a skater/team does during the program and if related to the music with a story or theme, it can transcend sport to art or entertainment. The choreography can occur in both elements and transitions.

Choreography is assessed with four criteria:

1. Purpose - The overall meaning - either portraying a character or theme or expressing the musical composition. The use of pattern and design. The movements/shapes of the skater/team are the words or message from the teams to the audience. If the movements don't match the music then the communication is lost or absent.
2. Structure & Pattern - The distribution of elements should be equal and interesting over the entire ice surface and throughout the entire program. This also includes the proportion of program given to each element and transition.
3. Body Design & Dimension - Use of body movement and full range of motion to make sense of the theme. The body becomes the tool that creates design and dimension in space. This includes movement over the ice surface but also the movement away from the core of the body.
4. Music & Movement Phrasing - All of the skating movements and elements should fit the phrasing of the music. The sense that the movements of the skaters were related to the music. The team's movements acknowledge the music and match the mood and vision of the theme with the music.

Performance / Execution (“Delivery”)

Performance and execution is the execution of the required elements of a program with the emotional involvement of the teams resulting in the creation of a special experience for the audience.

There are seven criteria used to assess performance and execution:

1. Physical, emotional, and intellectual involvement - The team's ability to intellectually understand the music and message and physically respond with movement which communicates the emotional connection with the audience.
2. Carriage - The manner in which one carries themselves, otherwise known as body alignment. Does not need to always be upright as the central core needs to move to allow the fluidity of movement.
3. Style and individuality/personality - The distinctive use of body line, execution of movement, reflection of emotion, and/or the beauty of movement that characteristic of each team. It is

the reflection of how the movement is used to express music. As a judge, it is important to remember to remove personal preferences when assessing a team's ability to demonstrate their own personal style

4. Clarity of movement - The precision of movement and body lines. Precise execution and unison between skaters.
5. Variety/Contrast of Movement - Executing movements in a variety of ways as it relates to tempo/rhythm/force/levels/shapes/angles with all body parts and use of the blade.
6. Projection - The emotional connection (internal or external) between the team and the audience. It's the ability for the skaters to use a body part to give the impression that the body part is extending beyond the body; as well it is the energy or connection between the skaters on the team. This can depend on maturity as well as culture.
7. Unison /"Oneness" - Do all skaters contribute evenly to movements (can be the same or different movements)

Interpretation ("Feeling")

The personal and creative translation (the feeling) of the music communicated through movements with intricacy, difficulty and quality. Translating the music to the audience through movement.

There are three criteria used to assess interpretation:

1. Musical movement
 - Expression of the music's style, character, and rhythm - how the team reflects the music through movement
 - Relationship between the partners reflecting the character of the music - the balance between partners in expression of the music
 - Appropriateness of music - is the team moving to an audible beat?
2. Expressive/Nuance Movement
 - Use of finesse to reflect the nuances of music - how the team manipulates the different details of the music in movement; movements should correspond to the music and there should be movements when the music demands it.
3. Effortless movement
 - Movements in time to music (timing) - not skating skills, but the ease of movement with changes in tempo; watch for fluid versus laboured movements to music.

Music - you can't have interpretation without it!

There are several components of music that are important to understand to fully evaluate interpretation:

- Melody - the tune; otherwise known as the "catchy" part of the music that you remember and sing
- Harmony - musical notes that support the melody

- Rhythm - defines the style of music and gives life to the music; for example, latin, waltz
- Form - the structure of the music; often it is known as the layout of the music or the sections of the music
- Texture - often defined by the number of instruments used in the musical piece
- Colour - instrument combination that changes the character or colour to the music; dynamics and variations in tempo often are used to add colour
- Musical Phrasing - the question and answer aspect of the music; it is not age or category dependent, but rather should be rewarded based on the skaters ability to demonstrate movements and skating elements with the musical phrasing

Interpretation is an area that can be greatly impacted by a program that is skated well or a program that is skated poorly. Remember to reward what you see and keep in mind that interpretation can vary greatly from one competition to the next.

Refereeing

Reference:

- Current ISU Synchronized Skating Referees Handbook

A challenging and sometimes daunting task that is new to the Junior/Senior level is the role of the Referee. This involves event management as an Event Referee and mentoring fellow officials through feedback and report writing as a Section Referee.

Event Referee

Your first exposure to refereeing will be as an Event Referee. At invitational events, it is often the most experienced or highly qualified judge who is assigned by the Technical Representative. However, often the opportunity is shared amongst all Judges at the competition. As an Event Referee your primary role is to manage the event (otherwise known as the flight). This encompasses organizing all your Officials to be on the panel at the right time, officiating the event and ensuring that it is progressing according to the appropriate rules, dealing with issues specific to that event, and authorizing the release of the results.

Before the event:

- Ensure your Officials are ready to officiate
- Ensure you have all references and equipment (whistle, stop watches)
- Coordinate with the Referee's Assistant Ice Level (IL) and ensure adequate method of communication
- Coordinate the communication with Data Specialists - inform them of what to do with missing marks (they should inform you if there are multiple GOEs missing or of any missing PC mark; they will then release the whole panels marks; you will inform all Judges on panel to double check for missing marks)

During the event:

- Officiate the event according to the necessary rules and regulations
- Maintain communication with the IL and Technical Controller
- Signal the music player or announcer when ready for the next team (unless otherwise organized with the Data Specialists)
- Take the appropriate technical deductions (may also be judging)
- Signal the team by a whistle sound in cases where team needs to be notified of safety concerns
- Signal the music player to stop music if appropriate

Rules to review:

- Definition of a fall - who takes the deduction?
- Determination of result publication
- Protest policy - what can be protested?
- Technical Rules of Synchronized Skating
 - Timing rules
 - Element deductions
 - Informing Judges of appropriate deductions
 - Communication with the Ice Level Referee
- Event Management
 - Commencement of timing
 - Entering/exiting the Ice surface
 - Warm-up time
 - Call to start
 - Interruptions
 - Medical Attention/Injuries
 - Restarts/substitutions
 - Clothing Deductions
 - On Ice Emergencies

After the event:

- Authorize the release of the results - need to sign the results sheet on the judges stand before leaving unless otherwise organized with the Data Specialists

Referee's Assistant at Ice Level (IL)

This is a role unique to synchronized skating. As there are many skaters on the ice at one time it may be difficult for one person, the Referee, to monitor for safety of the team. The IL stands at the boards, at the on ice door, and is in constant direct communication from the Event Referee. As well, the IL should be close enough to the coach of the team to easily communicate issues or concerns. Please refer to the ISU Referee's Handbook for Synchronized Skating for the formal definition of this role. The IL need not be qualified to official on the judging panel, only needs to be a qualified official of Skate Canada. They may or may not be listed as official members of the officiating panel, it is up to the discretion of the Tech Rep.

Before the event:

The Event Referee should inform the IL of how they wish the event to progress. Timing of the teams stepping on the ice to prepare for skating, what to do in-case the event runs ahead, how to communicate problems with timing, and if there is anything else the Event Referee wishes the IL to pay particular attention to.

During the event:

The Ice Level Referee stands at the “on-ice door” managing the event with the Coach and one alternate skater. They inform the Ice Captains when it is time for the teams to step on the ice. All teams are allowed a warm up of at least 1 minute in duration (without their music during the judging time of the previous Team) before the Team is called to start. How the team chooses to use this time is up to them. The IL is responsible for timing this warm up and to indicate to the Referee when the minimum amount of time has elapsed. The time for this warm up may go longer than 1 minute if the judging and technical panel take longer to enter the marks. Once the marks are read for the previous Team, the announcer will then announce the next Team and they will have 1 minute to assume their start position. Each Team must be in a start position and signal the Referee within 1 minute after their name is called and failing this the music will be played.

The IL is responsible to time the actual program for two reasons: the first is to provide the Event Referee with a double check of the program time; the second is because the coach has 30 seconds to inform the referees of music problems. If the coach informs you of music problems, it is the IL's responsibility to inform the Event Referee. But the most important role of the IL is to ensure the safety of the team. Close monitoring for pieces of costuming falling on the ice and incidences of injury is imperative! In case of costuming on the ice, the Ice Level Referee will consult with the coach and have the alternate skater go on the ice to retrieve the item at a time that does not impact the team while skating.

After the event:

At the conclusion of the event, the job of the IL is complete.

Regional Referee

The process of becoming a Regional Referee is a separate promotion from that of being a Junior/Senior level judge. However, it is important to review the process as the components of the promotion can be attained once promoted to the Senior level. The concepts are introduced here so you can begin to learn the role and to identify the responsibilities required of this position. As well, there are aspects of this role that you may be asked to do as an Event Referee, mainly report writing.

For more details on the role of a Referee, please refer to the ISU Referee Handbook for Synchronized Skating where details regarding competencies, role expectations, rules, procedures, and forms can be found.

Please Refer to the current ODAC (Officials Definition Appointment Qualifications Policy) for the

requirements for promotion (link in Appendix B).

Now that you have learned the basics of refereeing, it is now time to put the theory into practice. We will now review several programs and elements with each of you taking turns being the referee and leading discussions.

Conclusion

Now that we have taken the opportunity to closely look at both the GOE and PC marks separately, it is time to put the whole package together. We will now work through complete programs. Please refer to Appendix D for a copy of the Skate Canada Judges Personal Record, which you will use when trial judging and judging at all competitions.

Simulated Competition and Video Exam

Congratulations on all your hard work throughout this clinic. Your last task of this clinic is to complete a video exam.

Congratulations!

Congratulations on completing the clinic! Welcome to judging, we hope that you have enjoyed this clinic and look forward to seeing you at a competition soon!

APPENDIX A – CLINIC AGENDAS

NOVICE CLINIC AGENDA

	Topics	References
8:30-9:00	Registration	
8:30 – 9:00	Opening: Remarks/Logistics/Introductions	
9:00 – 9:30	Welcome to Figure Skating Officiating in Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPC System and Overview of Officials • How CPC works • Summary/Overview of CPC Scoring System • Roles and Responsibilities as a Judge • Official's Code of Ethics • Your First Competition 	
9:30 – 10:30	Description of elements and features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle • Line • Block • Creative/Choreographic • No Hold 	
10:30 – 11:00	Break	
11:00 – 12:30	Description of elements and other items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheel • Intersection • Moves Element • Step Sequences • Transitions • Falls • Free Skating Elements and Moves • Creative modification • Pivoting • Holds • Travelling 	
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30-15:00	Grade of Execution application and associated exercises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive criteria for determining the GOE • GOE Criteria by element • Reduction of GOE for specific errors 	

15:00-15:15	Break	
15:15-17:00	Grade of Execution application and associated exercises (cont.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive criteria for determining the GOE • GOE Criteria by element • Reduction of GOE for specific errors 	

Day 2	Topics	References
8:30 – 9:00	Recap of Day 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all elements 	
9:00-10:30	Introduction to Program Components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skating Skills • Transitions/Linking Footwork & Movement 	
10:30 – 11:00	Break	
11:00 – 12:30	Program Components (cont.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance/Execution • Choreography/Composition • Interpretation 	
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 15:00	Putting it all together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice judging • Application of GOE • Application of Program Components • Application of both 	
15:00 – 15:30	Break	
15:00 – 16:30	Simulated competition and video exam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide GOEs and PCs for 2 practice programs • Group discussion of above programs • Provide GOEs and PCs for 3 exam programs 	
16:30-17:00	Wrap-up/Questions	

JUNIOR/SENIOR CLINIC AGENDA

Day 1	Topics	References
8:30-9:00	Registration	
8:30 – 9:00	Opening: Remarks/Logistics/Introduction to moderators	
9:00 – 9:30	Review of Officiating in Canada Roles and Responsibilities as a Judge Official's Code of Ethics Expectations at the Junior/Senior Levels	
9:30 – 10:30	Review of elements and application of GOE Description of elements at Junior/Senior Levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Program • Free Program 	
10:30 – 11:00	Break	
11:00 – 12:30	Review of elements and application of GOE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice videos and examples 	
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30-15:00	Introduction to Program Components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skating Skills • Transitions/Linking Footwork & Movement • Performance/Execution • Choreography/Composition • Interpretation 	
15:00-15:15	Break	
15:15-17:00	Program Components (cont.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice videos and examples 	

Day 2	Topics	References
8:30 – 9:00	Recap of Day 1	
9:00-10:30	Introduction to Refereeing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Referee • Event Management • Referee Deductions 	
10:30 – 11:00	Break	

11:00 – 12:30	Refereeing (cont.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section Referee • Report Writing 	
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 15:00	Putting it all together 1. Practice judging 2. Application of GOE 3. Application of Program Components 4. Application of both	
15:00 – 15:30	Break	
15:00 – 16:30	Simulated competition and video exam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide GOEs and PCs for 2 practice programs • Group discussion of above programs • Provide GOEs and PCs for 3 exam programs 	
16:30-17:00	Wrap-up/Questions	

APPENDIX B - CURRENT SYNCHRONIZED SKATING REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

ISU www.isu.org

Special Regulations and Technical Rules Synchronized Skating

- www.isu.org > ISU Rules > Special Regulations and Technical Rules

ISU Communications

- www.isu.org > Single & Pair Skating/Ice Dance > ISU Judging System > Synchronized Skating > Choose current ISU communication

Referee's Handbook for Synchronized Skating

ISU Summary of Calls

- www.isu.org > Synchronized Skating > ISU Judging System > Synchronized Skating

Skate Canada www.skatecanada.ca

Skate Canada Rulebook

Skate Canada CPC Rulebook

Skate Canada Qualifying Competition Handbook

- www.info.skatecanada.ca > Rule Book

Skate Canada Synchronized Skating Technical Requirements

Skate Canada Summary of Calls for Synchronized Skating

Current ISU Communications

Guide for Technical Representatives and Organizing Committees

Any Skate Canada Clarifications/Updates

- www.info.skatecanada.ca > Technical

Code of Ethics

Conflict Policy

Trial Judge Report Synchronized Skating

Officials - Standards of Performance

- www.info.skatecanada.ca > Rule Book > Section 2000 – Policies & Procedures > Officials

Definitions, Appointment, Qualifications Policy

APPENDIX C - Resources for Clinic Moderators

Program Component DVDs

A set of DVDs with programs has been provided with the clinic materials. Programs change each year and we suggest that you choose a range of programs to assist with the discussion of program components.

Video Exam JPRs

The choice of programs for the video exams is up to the moderator. Ensure that you choose the appropriate number of programs to view and provide the candidates with a list of elements for them to give GOEs. Also ensure that they have an area to awarded program components for each program. You can use the results from the Skate Canada website as a guideline but remember that the view of the camera may be different than what the judging panel saw. Ensure that the candidates have an opportunity to practice what is expected and to discuss the results as a group. The candidates can hand in the completed JPRs to the moderator at the end of the exam session for marking.

The moderator is to complete the video exam assessment form. A sample of the assessment sheet is included after the exam JPRs in this manual. As the GOE criteria can change from year to year, there is no formal marking guideline. Clinic moderators are asked to assess the video exams based on the guidelines outlined above in the judging manual. The requirement for the novice level is to assess if the candidates have a basic understanding of the GOE criteria and can award a mark and have some information on their sheet as to how they determined the final GOE and identifying specific reductions.

Resources for Junior/Senior Clinic Moderators

For the Junior/Senior clinic the detail and objective comments used for both the GOE and program components should be the focus. Encourage the referee participants to introduce the program and then guide the other participants with feedback. The actual mark is not what is important as the emphasis on the detail of the criteria and depth of the objective descriptions provided. The deductions and reductions should also be included but the emphasis should be on the idea that the criteria are described first and then the reductions/deductions are added to the final mark.

Synchronized Skating Clinic – Video exam assessment

Name:		Section:	
Clinic:		Assessor's Name:	
Please rate the judge on the following skills using the four-point assessment scale (VG = Very Good, G = Good, F = Fair, NI = Needs Improvement). Please make comments, particularly in the event of an assessment of "Needs Improvement".			
	VG	G	F
	NI	NA	Comments
1. Assessment Process			
Technical Knowledge			
Knowledge of Current Rules and Trends			
Integration of Quality in Assessment			
Effective use of positive (+) GOEs			
Accuracy of reductions of GOEs			
Appropriately assigns PC scores			
Appropriately reflects differences in PCs			
2. Communication			
Participation in Discussions			
Ability to explain/defend GOEs and PCs			
Open-mindedness to other opinions			
Interacts well with other judges			
3. Deportment			
Respect for athletes, officials and stakeholders			
Organization during the clinic			
4. Leadership			
Commitment to working as an official			
Acts appropriately in situations			

DETAILED PROTOCOL ASSESSMENT:**1. GOEs:**

- a. In cases where the GOE must be a -3, did the judge mark correctly? Yes/No
If not, explain:
- b. Did the judge use an appropriate GOE range (+3 to -3) and award + GOEs when warranted?
- c. Comment on the judge's general overall GOE accuracy:

2. Program Components (PCs):

- a. Select a team with high PC marks. Comment on whether the judge recognized the quality of this team and used an appropriate range for PCs?
- b. Select a team with low PC marks. Comment on whether the judge recognized the quality of this team and used an appropriate range for PCs?

What is your overall assessment of this judge?					
Overall:	Very Good	Good	Acceptable	Fair	Needs Improvement
Additional Comments: 					
Name of Assessor:			Date of Assessment:		
Signature of Assessor:					