



2023-2024 Competition Season Fact Sheet

U.S. Figure Skating made several changes to the rules regarding test level and competition for singles athletes at the 2022 U.S. Figure Skating Governing Council. Please review this resource sheet for resources and direct questions to events@usfigureskating.org.

Quick Facts:

- Singles free skate test levels will remain as a minimum requirement to compete.
 - *For example, a skater still must pass their juvenile free skate test to compete in juvenile or skate up to intermediate.*
- Completion of an EMS Series Application at a particular level in the [National Qualifying Series \(NQS\)](#) and/or the [Excel National Series](#) will set the athlete's "**competitive floor**" for future events. An athlete's competitive floor is the lowest level they can compete at and is only dictated by the paid EMS Series Application (this is NOT tied to individual competition registrations).
 - *Competitive Floor = lowest level an athlete can compete at.*
 - *If an athlete participates in BOTH Excel and NQS, their NQS level may be ONE lower than their Excel level. For example, if an athlete skates Junior Excel, they may skate Novice NQS.*

Eligibility Scenarios:

#1 – Athlete with a Competitive Floor

Highest Free Skate Test: Senior
Past Excel Series Application: N/A
Past NQS Application: Novice
Future NQS Application: Novice

In scenario #1, the athlete may compete at Novice and above. If this athlete wants to explore their range in the Spring/Summer, they have that option. They can opt to compete at one event as Junior and that will not impact their **competitive floor** – regardless of series or EMS.

#2 – Athlete with a Competitive Floor

Highest Free Skate Test: Junior
Past Excel Series Application: Junior
Past NQS Application: N/A
Future NQS Application: Novice

In scenario #2, the athlete may compete at Junior at Excel and opt to skate one level lower in NQS at Novice.

#3 – Athlete without a Competitive Floor

Highest Free Skate Test: Junior
2022 Excel Series Application: N/A
2022-2023 NQS Application: N/A

Scenario #3 is an extreme example but when the athlete registers for a non-qualifying competition that offers ALL singles events and skating up is permitted, they will see **Pre-Preliminary - Senior**. This is where level/score banding will play a large role in future seasons.

#4 – Athlete without a Competitive Floor

Highest Free Skate Test: Preliminary
2022 Excel Series Application: N/A

Scenario #4 has two options. The athlete can follow the traditional test structure/eligibility and compete at preliminary or along with their coach, review their options to compete at a higher level. Coaches are encouraged to review the well balanced program requirements, in addition to the [NQS Athlete Profile data](#) from the 2022-2023 season, which begins at juvenile, to make decisions based on the athlete's skills and performance levels with respect to goals for the season. Athletes have the option to try different levels in nonqualifying competitions and not have it impact their future competitive floor.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Can athletes still “skate up” and earn test credit for IJS protocol?

Yes. Athletes may still compete one level higher than their test level in a non-qualifying competition, and they may still apply to receive test credit from an IJS competition.

Which competitions set my “competitive floor” for future level?

The competitive floor is NOT set through individual competition registrations, regardless of series designation or registration platform (i.e. EMS). A singles athlete's minimum competition level is set by completing a EMS Series Application for NQS and/or Excel at a particular level. There is a single floor (i.e. one level) and it is transferable to both NQS and Excel. **Update as of March 8, if an athlete competes in BOTH series, their NQS level may be ONE LOWER than their Excel level.**

Does this impact the adult track or adult qualifying competitions?

No. The rules have not changed for adults. Adult athletes may not have achieved tests higher than their competition level.

How does this impact other disciplines and programs?

Pairs, ice dance, and synchronized maintain their current rules for competition eligibility. Additionally, there are NO changes planned for solo dance or showcase at this time.

How will athletes know what level to enter?

Athletes still must have passed the minimum test level. From there, it is the responsibility of the coach and the athlete to make strategic decisions based on the athlete's developmental goals, priorities, and skill level. For those intending to compete in the National Qualifying Series (NQS) with or without a competitive floor, you are encouraged to review the NQS Athlete Profile. This data is based on results from the 2022-23 competitive season and reflects the performance of an athlete set on a given day during the National Qualifying Series (NQS). Scores for the 2023-24 competitive season may fluctuate contingent on varied program requirements, rule changes and scale of values. This information should be reviewed individually with each athlete's coach(es) to assess annual goals and selection of the appropriate competitive level. Additional information with regard to NQS can be found through the QR code below.



Direct questions to Events@usfigureskating.org.