



ATHLETE CERTIFICATION

Framework for Junior & Adult Athletes

Version 1.0 — September 2026

Prepared for Eastside Arm Wrestling

Document Control

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1. Purpose and Objectives

The **Eastside Arm Wrestling Athlete Certification** (EAWAC) is a structured development pathway designed to give arm wrestlers a clear sense of progression from beginner participation through advanced technical and competitive competency.

The system is intended to:

- Give athletes measurable milestones and a clear development pathway.
- Teach sound technique and safe table practice before emphasizing strength or competition.
- Provide coaches with a consistent framework for teaching and assessing athletes.
- Recognize development in technical skill, rules knowledge, table competency, and sportsmanship.
- Create a common language for athlete development within Eastside Arm Wrestling.
- Provide a foundation that could eventually be adapted for use by other clubs or organizations.

Certification is a statement of demonstrated competency against the EAWAC syllabus. It is not intended to function as a ranking of an athlete's competitive strength.

2. Guiding Principles

Principle	Application
Safety first	No athlete should pass a level while demonstrating unsafe technique or table behaviour.
Technique before strength	Early levels emphasize control, positioning and movement quality rather than maximum force.
Progressive difficulty	Each level adds technical, tactical and practical demands.
Demonstrated competency	Athletes must demonstrate skills rather than merely attend seminars.
Age appropriate	Junior requirements emphasize coordination, safety and learning rather than maximal strength.
Fair assessment	Assessors should use standardized criteria and avoid personal or competitive bias as far as possible.
Competition is complementary	Competitive experience becomes increasingly important at higher levels, but certification does not solely depend on it especially at the lower levels..
Continuous development	Certification recognizes a stage of development rather than a permanent claim of superiority.

3. Certification Structure

The system contains two parallel pathways:

Pathway	Levels	Primary emphasis
Adult (above 18 years old)	Level 1–6	Technical, tactical, rules, and competitive competency
Junior (18 years and under)	Junior Level 1–6	Safety, coordination, technical fundamentals and age-appropriate competition

The adult levels are as follows:

Level	Name	Developmental meaning
1	Foundation	Understands safe participation and basic movements
2	Novice	Demonstrates fundamental technical competency
3	Intermediate	Can combine techniques and build a basic game
4	Advanced	Can train and compete with meaningful technical independence
5	Elite	Demonstrates advanced adaptability and high-level practical competency
6	Master	Exceptional technical knowledge, application, and contribution to the sport

4. Adult Certification Levels

Level 1 — Foundation

- Basic table setup and posture.
- Correct elbow placement and grip.
- Understanding of starts, pins and common fouls.
- Basic hook, toproll and press movement patterns.
- Safe release and controlled practice behaviour.
- Warm-up and basic injury-prevention awareness.

Level 2 — Novice

- Consistent execution of hook and toproll fundamentals.
- Basic understanding of pronation, cupping, rising, back pressure and side pressure.
- Understanding of straps and basic table positioning.
- Ability to train safely with partners without constant coach intervention.
- Basic understanding of offensive, neutral, and defensive positions.

Level 3 — Intermediate

- Ability to build and explain a basic technical game.
- General understanding of a few hook and toproll concepts.
- Basic understanding of transitions between techniques and safe positions.
- Understanding hand control, leverage, angles, and opponent positioning.
- Ability to respond to common match scenarios.

Level 4 — Advanced

- Good understanding of multiple variations of major styles.
- Adaptation to different hand sizes and opponent styles.
- Effective strap technique.
- Defensive recovery and transitions.
- Clear knowledge of competition rules and match strategy.

- Minimum participation in at least one (1) sanctioned national or club tournament at the “Novice” or “Pro” level.

Level 5 — Elite

- Advanced technical adaptability under live resistance.
- Strong understanding of most techniques.
- Ability to analyze opponents and adjust strategy.
- Consistent application of technique under competitive pressure.
- Demonstrated competition experience with a minimum participation in at least three (3) sanctioned national or club tournaments at the “Pro” level.
- Ability to explain and demonstrate advanced concepts to lower-level athletes.

Level 6 — Master

- Exceptional breadth and depth of technical knowledge.
- High-level practical application against varied opponents.
- Advanced match analysis and strategic understanding.
- Strong rules and safety knowledge.
- Demonstrated contribution to athlete development, coaching, officiating, or the growth of the sport.
- Subject to certification committee review. Excellent competitive results (podium finishes at the national or international level) will be highly sought-after.

5. Junior Certification Levels

Junior certification is not simply a lower-strength version of the adult system. Assessment prioritizes safe movement, coordination, understanding, sportsmanship, and age-appropriate physical development. Maximum-strength testing or competitive results are not a requirement for any level of junior certification.

Level	Name	Primary focus
J1	Explorer	Understanding safety, rules, table familiarity, and basic movement
J2	Builder	Fundamental techniques and controlled practice
J3	Competitor	Technique combinations, straps and basic tactics
J4	Junior Advanced	Rules, match preparation and competition readiness
J5	Junior Elite	Adaptability, strategy and live technical application
J6	Junior Master	High technical competency, leadership and development

Junior Level 1 — Explorer

- Learn what arm wrestling is and how the table is used.
- Correct elbow and hand position.
- Basic rules and sportsmanship.
- Safe warm-up and safe release.

Junior Level 2 — Builder

- Basic hook and toproll patterns.
- Introductory pronation, cupping and back pressure.
- Controlled practice against partners.

Junior Level 3 — Competitor

- Combining techniques.
- Basic defensive positions and transitions.
- Referee commands and competition procedure.
- Introduction to straps and tactical concepts.

Junior Level 4 — Junior Advanced

- Competition etiquette and preparation.
- Basic match strategy and controlled live sparring.
- Minimum participation in at least one (1) sanctioned national or club tournament at the “Junior” level.

Junior Level 5 — Junior Elite

- Technical adaptability.
- Match analysis and tactical decision-making.
- Consistent execution under live resistance.
- Ability to explain fundamental techniques.
- Minimum participation in at least three (3) sanctioned national or club tournaments at the “Junior” level.

Junior Level 6 — Junior Master

- Advanced technical competency.
- Strong rules and safety knowledge.
- Positive leadership and sportsmanship.
- Ability to assist with instructing others under senior coach/instructor’s supervision.
- Subject to certification committee review. Competitive participation and results will be a significant factor in the review process.

Juniors at the Junior Elite or Junior Master level can earn a provisional adult Advanced or Elite certification before turning 19 at the discretion of the certification committee if they have displayed outstanding competency in all 5 of the assessment categories.

6. Competency Framework

Category	What is assessed
A. Technique	Positioning, hand control, hook, toproll, press, transitions, and technical execution
B. Rules & Knowledge	Rules, fouls, referee commands, terminology, match procedure, and safety
C. Physical Preparation	Warming up, conditioning, and appropriate physical preparation
D. Tactical Understanding	Opponent analysis, technique selection, transitions and match strategy

E. Sportsmanship & Conduct	Respect, coachability, partner safety, discipline and responsible conduct
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Not every category carries equal weight at every level. Early levels prioritize safety and fundamentals; higher levels progressively increase the importance of live application and tactical decision-making.

7. Assessment and Scoring

Weightage of categories:

Category	Suggested weightage
Technique	40%
Rules & Knowledge	20%
Physical Preparation	20%
Tactical Understanding	10%
Sportsmanship & Conduct	10%

Passing standard:

- Overall score of at least 70% (85% for Elite/Junior Elite and Master/Junior Master).
- No critical safety failure.
- Any competition or experience requirement must also be satisfied.

A safety-critical failure will result in an unsuccessful assessment regardless of the numerical score.

8. Level-by-Level Assessment Standards

Level 1 — Foundation / Explorer

- Correct table setup and body position.
- Correct grip and elbow placement.
- Explain the purpose of warm-up and safe release.
- Demonstrate basic hook and toproll movement patterns.
- Identify a pin and common fouls.
- Complete controlled practice without unsafe behaviour.

Level 2 — Novice / Builder

- Demonstrate hook and toproll against controlled resistance.
- Demonstrate basic pronation, cupping, rising and back pressure.
- Explain basic strap procedure.
- Identify offensive, neutral, and defensive positions.
- Perform basic transitions under coach instruction.

Level 3 — Intermediate / Competitor

- Demonstrate at least two variations of a toproll and two variations of a hook.
- Demonstrate a press transition.

- Explain how hand control changes available techniques.
- Respond appropriately to at least three practical match scenarios.
- Demonstrate controlled live pulling with safe winning and losing positions.

Level 4 — Advanced / Junior Advanced

- Demonstrate several complete technical systems.
- Adapt technique to at least three different opponent styles or scenarios.
- Use straps competently.
- Explain match strategy and energy management.
- Demonstrate competition procedure and rules knowledge.
- Meet the competition-experience requirement where applicable.

Level 5 — Elite / Junior Elite

- Apply technical systems consistently against live resistance.
- Analyze an opponent's hand, arm, and preferred direction.
- Make tactical changes during a simulated or real match.
- Demonstrate advanced defensive recovery.
- Explain advanced concepts clearly enough to teach a lower-level athlete.
- Meet the competition-experience requirement where applicable.

Level 6 — Master / Junior Master

- Demonstrate exceptional technical breadth and adaptability.
- Conduct detailed match/technique analysis.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of rules and safety.
- Contribute meaningfully to athlete development, coaching, officiating, or sport development.
- Pass certification committee review.

9. Certification Administration

Via individual application:

1. Coach identifies an athlete as assessment-ready.
2. Athlete submits an assessment request.
3. A qualified assessor conducts the assessment using the standardized form.
4. Results are recorded as Pass or Fail.
5. Successful athletes receive certification and a record of their results.
6. The athlete receives feedback and a development plan for the next level.

Alternatively, there will be periodic certification courses conducted by qualified assessors where athletes can be certified in batches. They will be subject to the same standards as those who obtain certification via individual application.

Certification statuses:

Status	Meaning
Active	Current certification requirements are satisfied.
Provisional	For outstanding Junior athletes who have been identified as deserving of an adult certification by the certification committee.
Inactive	Certification is retained historically but is not currently active due to prolonged inactivity or expired requirements.
Suspended	Certification is temporarily withheld due to a serious safety, conduct, or integrity issue, subject to review.

10. Assessors and Quality Control

Recommended assessor structure:

- Level 1–2: Approved club junior assessors.
- Level 3–4: Approved club senior assessors.
- Level 5–6: Head assessor or certification committee.
- An assessor should not be the sole assessor for a close family member or where a conflict of interest exists.
- Assessors should use the same syllabus and scoring standards across athletes.

Assessor requirements include:

- Holding a minimum of “Advanced” EAWAC certification level or recognized equivalent experience.
- Demonstrated ability to explain rules and techniques objectively.
- Completion of an internal assessor orientation.
- Agreement to the Assessor Code of Conduct.

11. Certification Maintenance and Inactive Status

Certification should recognize demonstrated competency while allowing for the fact that skills can decline with prolonged inactivity.

Level	Recommended review
1–2	No routine reassessment; maintain through active club participation
3	Review every 1 year
4	Review every 2 years
5	Periodic review; no automatic expiry
6	Periodic review; no automatic expiry

Upon becoming “Inactive,” a refresher assessment may restore active status.

12. Safety and Athlete Welfare

- No certification level overrides safe pulling practices.
- Athletes must be taught to recognize dangerous arm, shoulder, and wrist positions.
- Coaches and assessors should stop a drill or match when technique becomes unsafe.
- Junior athletes should not be required to perform maximal-strength tests for certification.
- Training loads should be age-appropriate and progressed gradually.
- Athletes should be encouraged to report pain or injury and seek appropriate professional care when necessary.
- Certification should never be used to pressure an athlete into pulling beyond their safe capacity.

13. Certificates, Badges and Records

Each successful certification may be recognized through any of the following:

- Printed certificate.
- Digital certificate or profile badge.
- Club records database.

Each record should contain:

- Athlete name
- Certification level
- Assessment date
- Assessor name
- Result
- Next recommended level or development targets.

14. Appeals and Reassessment

- An athlete who does not pass should receive clear feedback on the competencies that require development.
- A reassessment should normally be permitted after an appropriate preparation period.
- For disputed assessments, a second assessor may review the evidence.
- Higher-level or committee decisions should be documented.
- Appeals should address the assessment process and evidence, not the athlete's competitive reputation.

Appendix A — Sample Assessment Sheet

Field	Entry
Athlete Name	
Date	
Current Level	
Assessor Name	
Result	Pass / Fail
Level Attained	

Scoring

Category	Score	Weighted Score	Comments
Technique	-/10		
Rules & Knowledge	-/10		
Physical Preparation	-/10		
Tactical Understanding	-/10		
Sportsmanship & Conduct	-/10		
TOTAL		-/100	

Immediate failures:

- ☐ Critically unsafe arm wrestling position
- ☐ Attempts to injure opponent/assessor
- ☐ Unsportsmanlike/unruly conduct

Assessor recommendation(s) for follow-up:

Appendix B — Athlete Progress Record

Date	Level	Result	Assessor	Development notes

Appendix C — Assessor Code of Conduct

- Assess athletes objectively and consistently.
- Prioritize athlete safety over completion of an assessment.
- Do not inflate or reduce an athlete's level because of personal relationships, reputation, or competitive status.
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Maintain confidentiality of assessment records where appropriate.
- Declare conflicts of interest.
- Use the current approved EAWAC syllabus and assessment form.
- Maintain their own technical knowledge and rules awareness.
- Treat all athletes with respect regardless of age, experience or competitive ability.

Closing Statement

The Eastside Arm Wrestling Athlete Certification System is intended to make athlete development visible, structured, and motivating. Its success should be measured not by how many certificates are issued, but by whether athletes become safer, more knowledgeable, more technically competent, and better prepared to participate in arm wrestling.