

A Participant Model for Gymnastics

Research was done in 2012 (Leeds Metropolitan University, Further Development of the Gymnastics Participant Model) to describe the different groups of participants in gymnastics, in order to ensure they can receive the appropriate products/resources; and services in particular coaching. Participant segments have been created through the extensive research, which included talking to a number of coaches, gymnasts and parents.

The table below shows the different reasons for people’s initial and continued engagement (i.e. motivation) in gymnastics:

Category	Reasons for Engagement Segment Description
‘Movement and skill development’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have fun • To develop basic movement skills and competence • To learn about the sport • To develop physical and psychological confidence
‘Flexibility, strength and fitness’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve physical condition • To develop movement skills and competence • To develop confidence and discipline • To develop social ties
‘Dance, display and socialise’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have fun • To display/perform • To develop (and maintain) social ties • To stay in a sport they love • To improve (and maintain) physical condition
‘Compete’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To compete • To win competition
‘Compete at the highest levels’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To compete at the highest level • To win medals
‘Help others’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To guide and support younger gymnasts • To stay in a sport they love • To give something back to the sport

The 'Participant Model for Gymnastics' provides a tool to visually represent, think about and undertake planning with regard to the gymnastics participant base:

	Movement & skill development	Flexibility, strength & fitness	Dance, display & socialise	Compete	Compete at the highest levels	Help others
22 and over years						
19-21 years						
17-18 years						
15-16 years						
12-14 years						
8-11 years						
5-7 years						
0-4 years						

The model can be used to describe, think about, and undertake planning to achieve participation and performance objectives. It can also be used to map out product options (e.g. disciplines/activities/programmes) available within the sport. British Gymnastics has used the model to look at the available offer per age group and 'reason for engagement' category (e.g. Movement & skill development). New programmes have been designed via the Gymnastics for All Strategy to ensure we have targeted activities to suit the wants/needs of the different groups we have in the sport. By providing appropriate activities, environments and coaching, we hope to retain participants in the sport for longer.

The research produced 8 defined age segments:

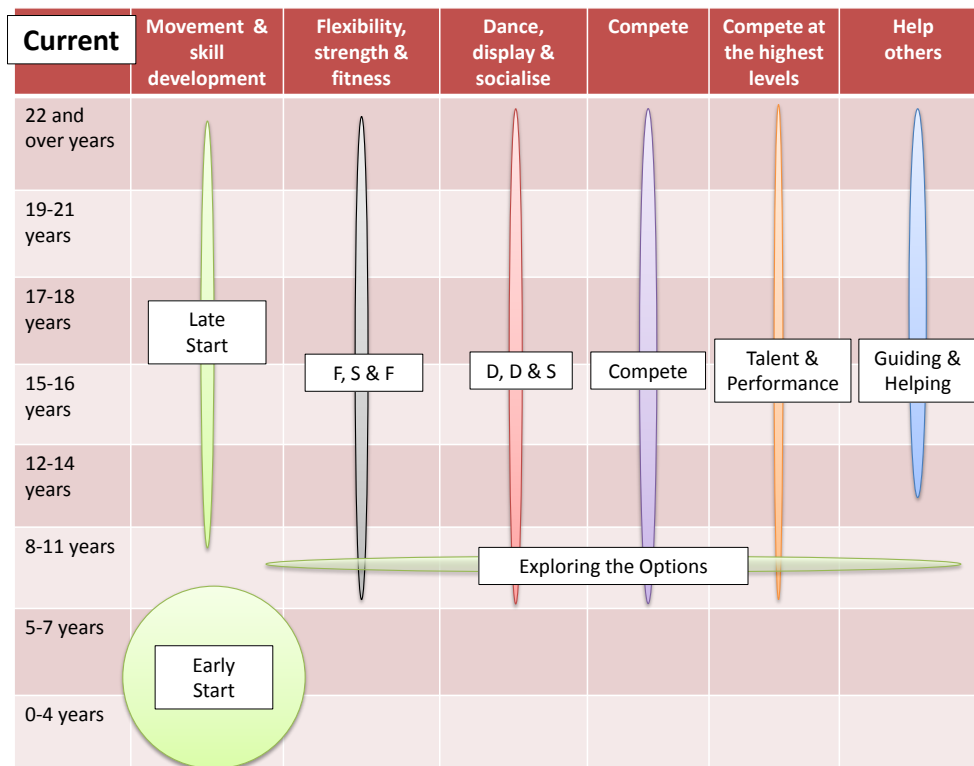
- 22 years and over
- 19-21 years
- 17-18 years
- 15-16 years
- 12-14 years
- 8-11 years
- 5-7 years
- 0-4 years

The following participant segment descriptions were identified through the research:

- Early start
- Exploring the options
- Late start
- Flexibility, strength and fitness
- Dance, display and socialise
- Compete
- Talent and performance
- Guiding and helping

The Chart below shows the participant model for gymnastics overlaid with the participant segments. In this way, it is possible to see that different participant segments have different motivations (reasons for engagement) and therefore require appropriate activities to meet their needs.

Chart: BG Participant Segments



[Click here](#) to download tables with detailed information about the different gymnastics participant segments.