

FAQ - Program Components

Q: What are Program Components?

A: Program Components are specific marks that each Judge awards which correspond to the artistic and choreographic aspects of programs as well as the skating skills of the athletes. As of the season 2022/23, the Judges will award three instead of five marks for the Program Components.

Q: Why are they important?

A: Figure Skating is unique, combining artistry, physical and technical abilities to music. Program Components are important because they award athletes for their artistic, choreographic and skating skills which are just as relevant as the Elements Score which awards the Skaters for the difficulty and quality of their Elements (e.g. jumps, spins, lifts etc.). It is important that the technical Elements and everything performed in between those Elements (steps, movements, interpretation of the music, presentation etc.) are of excellent quality and, above all, are well connected to each other, and corresponding to the music.

Q: How do the Judges award Program Components and how are they trained for this?

A: In awarding each Program Component mark, Judges follow established rules and regulations that outline the criteria by which each Program Component should be scored. The spectrum of available marks ranges from 0 to 10 with 10 being outstanding.

As part of their training each Judge is responsible for studying and applying the Special Regulations and Technical Rules and any relevant ISU Communications, attending regular seminars, and passing the required exams. It takes years before an individual can officiate at the international level.

Q: Why are the Program Components being reduced from five to three?

A: With each Program Component being defined by a set of criteria, it became obvious that the 27 criteria that were used were too many or lacked a clear and specific definition. Because of this observation, the three Figure Skating Technical Committees who are responsible for the rules of each individual discipline of Figure Skating - namely Single and Pair Skating, Ice Dance, and Synchronized Skating - asked that a review of the criteria and Components be undertaken. As a result of this work that started in 2020, three clear and distinct areas of judgment emerged:

1. **Composition**, how the program is designed in relation to the music;
2. **Presentation**, how the program is performed which accounts for the expressive abilities of the Skaters and their musical sensitivity, and
3. **Skating skills**, which evaluates the techniques of skating and movement.

Q: What is the advantage of having less Program Components?

A: The three new Program Components clearly organize and define the evaluation criteria used by Judges. As a result, there will be more objective evaluation and comprehensive feedback for the athletes, their coaches, and the public.

Q: Which were the Five Program Components and which will disappear now?

A: The previous five Program Components consisted of:

1. **Skating Skills**
2. **Transitions**
3. **Performance**
4. **Composition**
5. **Interpretation of the Music/Timing (for Ice Dance)**

It is very important to underline that no aspect which makes skating attractive and artistic has been removed. Rather, the criteria that previously defined each of the five Components have been simplified and reorganized in a more logical way.

For example: while the '**Transitions**' Component no longer exists as a stand-alone Component, the act of seamlessly connecting Elements (through a variety of edges, steps, turns and body movements following the musical structure) is now included in and is an essential part of the "**Composition**" Component.

The criteria of the component "**Interpretation**" now belong to the new Component "**Presentation**" and the criteria under "**Performance**" have been shared among the three newly restructured Program Components.

Q: How will this affect the scoring?

A: The goal of having clear definitions associated with each Program Component, is to have greater objectivity and a fairer scoring that will more accurately reflect the artistic, choreographic, skating and movement techniques of Skaters.

Q: How will this affect the programs – will there be now more focus on jumps?

A: With five Components with unclear definitions, it became obvious that several Skaters with the ability to execute the more difficult jumps also benefited from higher Program Component scores. With three clearly defined and simplified Program Components, the overall score will better reflect the artistic, choreographic, skating and movement abilities of the skater. As before, the focus will be equally on the Elements and the Program Components.

Q: How can the balance between the technical and artistic parts of the programs be maintained?

A: The contribution derived from Program Components to the overall score remains the same. To maintain this equivalence, the factors associated with each Component have been increased in a mathematically proportional way.

Q: Where can I find more information?

A: The Special Regulations and Technical Rules for Single & Pair Skating, Ice Dance and Synchronized Skating 2022 are currently being drafted and will be published as soon as possible [here](#).