Rules and Regulations IPAAT 2026

Competition Format

To enter you must complete an application form and pay your £40 entry fee (this is per entry, so Double competitors only need to pay one £40). Your video can then be sent to us at a later date.
There are up to 30 people in each category. If we have less than 6 competitors in a category we reserve the right to cancel that category, and will either offer you a refund or the option to be judged alongside another category. Before we do that, we will advertise specifically to attract more entries for that category, and will communicate with anyone who has already entered. We do not take these decisions lightly, as we understand the work competitors put into their routines.

Youth categories are:

- Youth Pole 8-16 years (no move restrictions)
- Youth Hoop MINI 7 years and under 3-point contact above the bottom bar, see below)
- Youth Intermediate Hoop 8-12 years (3-point contact above the bottom bar, see below)
- Youth Intermediate Hoop 13-16 years (3-point contact above the bottom bar, see below)
- Youth Advanced Hoop 8-12 years (no move restrictions)
- Youth Advanced Hoop 13-16 years (no move restrictions)
- Doubles hoop 8-16 years (no move restrictions)
- Youth Silks 8-12 years (no unlocked drops)
- Youth Silks 13-16 years (no unlocked drops)

Adult 17+ years categories are:

- Intermediate Hoop (move restrictions, see below; must not have won at this level & no instructors)
- Advanced Hoop (no move restrictions)
- Doubles hoop (no move restrictions)
- Intermediate Silks (move restrictions, see below; must not have won at this level & no instructors)
- Advanced Silks (no move restrictions)
- Doubles Pole (no move restrictions)
- Intermediate Pole (move restrictions, see below; must not have won at this level & no instructors)
- Advanced Pole (No move restrictions, NO Instructors including helpers, NO professional performers, Must not have won at the level or higher, also allows multiple performers/doubles+)
- Expert Pole (no move restrictions)
- Heel Pole Technique (no move restrictions/ no nudity/see below for judging criteria)
- Champions Pole (invitation only must have taken 1st/2nd place in any higher-level pole competitions)

Competition Structure

The Quarter Finals are an online competition.
The top 10-15 entries of each category will be announced on Facebook as our semi-finalists.
The top 5 -7 contestants go through to our Live Final.
If we do not get 5+ people to enter a category this will not go to the live final and be judged online and announced online. competitors will receive a medal.
If we cannot hold a Live Final, due to Covid-19 restrictions put in place by either the government or the venue, then we reserve the right to arrange an alternative. We will of course give as much notice as possible.
Competitors in our **Champions categories** do not need to submit anything for the Quarter Finals. Instead they will simply be invited to come and perform at our Live Final event.

Quarter Finals & Video Entry

The Quarter Finals are an online competition, judged by 3 - 5 independent judges. We prefer videos to be submitted via YouTube, though we will consider other platforms if you are having copyright issues. We will not accept video files. Video links must be emailed to info@ipaat.co.uk. You will get an email confirmation to say that we have received it.
The deadline to send your video to us is midnight on **1st November 2026** Please be aware that due to the large amount of entries that we receive at the last minute, it is not physically possible for us to check them all and get the email confirmations out by that deadline. We highly recommend sending your entry at least a week before that date, to give us time to check it and if necessary inform you of any issues, and giving you the chance to rectify them. Whilst we try to check all entries for anything that will cause you to either lose points or be disqualified, we cannot guarantee that firstly we will spot it or secondly, we will give you enough time to refilm your entry. It remains your responsibility to read and adhere to the rules of this competition.
Video entries can be a maximum of 3 minutes long. If you go over this you will lose 3 points for each 10 seconds over. Videos must be filmed as one continuous piece, and must not be edited. This includes adding music to your video. There must be no obvious panning of the camera, a slight adjustment may be allowed but nothing more.

Live Finals
Routines can be up to 3 minutes long. Champions only may have up to 5 minutes.
Music & Bios for the LIVE finalists need to be sent to info@ipaat.co.uk by **28th December 2026.** if these aren't received by then you will be automatically disqualified. Song choice is strictly on a first come, first serve basis. No duplicates will be allowed in the same category.

Equipment

We understand that not everyone has access to the same equipment as us. You may use whatever specification poles, hoop or silks that you have available for your video entry. Please be aware though that you may not score as highly if the equipment or space impacts your performance, so for example if your equipment is too close to a wall and you have to dodge it; your silk is too short and restrictive, or you only have a static pole.

At the final, both poles are 45mm diameter, one static one and the other on spin, and both are full poles - floor to structure. ADULTS hoop will be single point and 180cm from floor to the bottom bar 95cm hoop
YOUTH hoop will be single point and 180cm from floor to the bottom bar 95cm hoop OR 85cm which is 140cm off the floor.
YOUTH MINI 7 years and under 85cm hoop 100-140cm off the floor
Silks are 5.8m high and are medium stretch
ALL YOUTH COMPEPITORS WILL HAVE A MAT

Costume
No heels, ankle boots, ankle shoes, ankle protectors or any type of PVC on the feet or legs at all. No long boots. **This does NOT apply to our Heels and Champions Pole category.**
Please keep it clean, and tape yourself (both men and women), you will be marked down for any costume malfunction. Men can be topless. Any indecent exposure will result in you being disqualified. At the Final, the music will cut off and your performance will finish.

Level of categories
There are restrictions of what moves are allowed in some categories. More details are below.

If you have won a competition at the same standard as IPAAT at Intermediate Pole level you must go into the Advanced Pole category. Same applies to Advanced Pole level you must go into the Expert Pole category, and to the Intermediate Hoop & Silks levels, you must go into the Advanced categories. Whilst Expert and Doubles have no restrictions on moves, if we believe you are at a higher level than Expert we would invite you to be in our Champion's category.

Instructors past and present are not allowed to enter our Intermediate Pole, Hoop or Silks levels, or our Advanced Pole category.

If you have any queries about which level you would need to enter please email info@ipaat.co.uk

Disallowed Moves

Please check what moves are allowed in your category. A summary is below, this is not an exhaustive list, check with us if you are not sure. We will need a video or picture of the move if you're unsure.

Youth Pole 8-16 years		
No restrictions		

Intermediate Pole	**Advanced Pole**	**Expert/Doubles/Champions Pole**
No aerial inverts No aerial shoulder mounts (from the floor is fine) No single handed move up the pole e.g. ballerina entry No single knee hangs – e.g. cocoon, flying angel NO extreme flexibility moves e.g. BOP, eagle, rainbow. No release moves from the pole, example jasmine/butterfly flip, hanglider flip, fonji. Re grip etc you can do a basic Ayesha from crucifix but no iron x or lowering - NO Handsprings	No move restrictions NO Instructors including helpers NO professional performers Must not have won at the level or higher	No restrictions

Youth advanced Hoop	**Youth and Adult Intermediate Aerial Hoop** **Youth Hoop MINI 7 years and under**	**Advanced/Doubles Aerial Hoop**
No restrictions	3 points of contact required in all moves above the bottom bar, apart from when mounting the top bar. This means you cannot lower from the top bar into a skin the cat. No foot or heel hangs or neck hangs, including on the strop.	No restrictions
Intermediate Aerial Silks & Youth		**Advanced Aerial Silks**
No unlocked drops. This is when you drop, and must then re-catch, as you fall, to stop yourself from falling. Also, when the wrap isn't locked and only your strength required is to stop you from falling. A locked dropped is where you drop and the wrap you created catches you.		No restrictions No kamikaze

If you do an illegal move you will either be disqualified, or up to 3 points PER JUDGE for each move will be deducted, we now do not move competitors into the next category. We reserve the right to decide which. the head judge has the final decision.

If you transition and accidentally do an illegal move, points will be deducted. e.g Extended Butterfly and your foot comes off which is a Handspring (you quickly correct yourself and do not hold the handspring) points will be deducted. This example applies to the Advanced Pole category.

Feedback and Scoring

You will be marked out of 10 points for each of the following categories

- Tricks
- Transitions on the equipment
- Fluidity
- Stage Presence
- Costume
- Well rounded – e.g. have you included strength, flexibility, used both poles/top and bottom bars.
- Overall

Deductions will be made for disallowed moves and going over the maximum amount of time allowed for your routine.
Feedback will be emailed out to you as soon as possible after the finalists have been announced on Facebook. We would politely like to remind everyone that there is no point chasing us for results or feedback. We do it as fast as we can, and if we haven't announced the results, that will simply be because we haven't had them back from the judges.

Scoring for the final
The highest and lowest judge score is not counted and is taken out, this provides a fair judging system encase of any biased decisions.
Any deduction will not be on your feedback scoring sheet.

Overall Winner:
This will be decided on the highest score of the day.

Heel Pole Technique Category judging criteria:
Heel technique: clean execution of drags, bangs, clacks and slides **on** and **off** the pole.
Musicality: syncing movements & heel work to the rhythm & emotion of the music
Floorwork flow: smooth transitions between pole & floor using heel-led movement
Control & confidence: strong lines, balanced spins & intentional shapes
Stage presence
Overall (was it well rounded and overall impression)
Costume (no nudity)

Other

Under 18s must have their parent/guardian's consent to enter and must chaperone them through the whole of the live show. IPAAT does not take any responsibly for contestants. Everyone entering the albert hall must have a ticket.

Cancellation

Please be reminded that if you choose to pull out at ANY POINT a £25 cancellation fee will be immediately payable.

Insurance
You are required to have performers liability insurance certificate if you are successful in getting through to the live final. IPAAT does not cover you for any injury coursed when performing to yourself or others, nor does it cover you for any trips slips or falls.