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International Gymnastics Federation calls on Karl to develop Gymnastics at Global level

[Karl Wharton](#), Senior Lecturer in Sport Coaching at Northumbria has been invited by the International Gymnastics Federation to be part of a four strong working group that will have significant impact on the development of acrobatic gymnastics at a global level.

The group was formed as a result of the [International Gymnastics Federation \(FIG\)](#) receiving support from the International Olympic Committee to go ahead with the World Age Group Development and Competition Programme.

The aim of the group is to co-ordinate and merge with the FIG academy programme (a three-level coach education programme) for Acrobatic Gymnastics. The program will include a development portion that includes a progressive physical and technical testing programme for all aspects of the sport and a lower age and lower level competition program that will lead to the international age group rules.

Karl's involvement in the group is said to be indispensable for these two programmes to be coordinated and integrated properly. His involvement in the development of the technical content and curriculum of the academy programme was instrumental, with his work forming the basis of the three levels of technical manuals and technical lectures that the FIG have been permitted to use.

This is not the first time Karl's outstanding service to coaching gymnastics has been recognised both regionally and internationally. He [received an MBE](#) for his leading work in coaching gymnastics in 2016 being honoured in particular for the success of the Deerness Gymnastic Academy in Durham where he is a volunteer director as well as his role on the FIG Acrobatic Gymnastics Technical Committee.

Speaking about the appointment Karl said: "Obviously, I am delighted to be invited to be part of this working group and to have an impact on the world stage in the development of gymnastics. It is a great honour and something that will further enhance my standing as a world expert in coaching pedagogy and something that will add value and knowledge to my teaching and authenticity with the students. I am grateful to the Faculty of Health & Life Sciences and the University for supporting me with this position."

[Professor John Saxton](#), Head of Northumbria's [Department of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation](#), added: "This is excellent news for Karl and a worthy acknowledgment of his vast experience as a gymnastics coach. Karl's involvement in this programme and more generally, with the sport's governing body, brings real advantages for students on our Sport programmes at Northumbria. They get access to a world-class gymnastics coach who has played an important role in shaping developments in the sport."

For more information about sport coaching courses at Northumbria visit <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/academic-departments/sport->

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