

OPEN WATER  
**NATIONAL AGE GROUP  
 CHAMPIONSHIPS**

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## Swim England Open Water National Age Group Championships, 25 July 2026, Rother Valley Country Park

### CONDITIONS

The minimum entry qualifying times – Long Course pool qualifying only:

#### 1500m

	13 yrs	14 yrs	15 yrs	16 yrs	17/18 yrs	19 yrs & over
<b>Female</b>	19.10.00	18.20.00	18.05.00	17.50.00	17.35.00	17.20.00
<b>Open/Male</b>	19.05.00	17.30.00	17.10.00	16.55.00	16.20.00	15.55.00

- The Swimming Leadership Group (“the Group”) reserves full powers over the Swim England Open Water National Age Group Championships (“the National Championships”), including but not limited to cancelling, postponing or changing the National Championships venue and/or format due to reasons beyond its reasonable control.
- The National Championships shall be held under Swim England Regulations and World Aquatics Technical Rules of Open Water Swimming, except where varied by these conditions.
- Competitors must be:
  - registered Swim England Club Compete members of the club in whose name they are entered, at the date of making the initial entry, and may enter in the name of one club only. The club must be offered by the online entry system.
  - All other competitors will be classified as ‘overseas competitors’ and entries will be accepted from Scottish Swimming, Swim Wales members and competitors from other countries affiliated to World Aquatics.
- Competitors entering via the pool-based qualification must have equaled or bettered the entry time in an event designated or licensed by Swim England, Scottish Swimming or Swim Wales for entry into National competitions or, for overseas competitors, approved by their federation. Times must have been achieved since 1 July 2025.
- Competitors placed in a Swim England Regional Open Water Championships, being a member of a club in that Region, or the nominated Scottish Swimming or Swim Wales Open Water Championships, who do not achieve entry by means of a pool based swim, may also enter the National Championships providing they meet the Age Groupings for the National Championships. Places offered: East and West Midlands 3; London, North East, North West and South West 4; East 5; South East 7.
- If a Regional Open Water event is cancelled or abandoned due to unsuitable conditions, there will be no qualifiers for the National Championships from that event. However, if the cancelling Region is able to arrange for its affected competitors to take part in one other Region’s scheduled event, this alternative arrangement will be accepted for the National Championships qualification. In such cases, the results must be clearly segregated by

OPEN WATER  
**NATIONAL AGE GROUP  
CHAMPIONSHIPS**

- Region, and only the results relating to each Region's own competitors will be used to determine that Region's qualifiers for the National Championships.
7. The three highest placed competitors per age group in Scottish Swimming and Swim Wales Open Water Championships may also enter the National Championships.
  8. If a swimmer declines the invitation to compete or has already entered with a pool swim they will not be replaced.
  9. **The closing Date for Pool Based Entries is 12 noon, Wednesday 1 July 2026.**
  10. **Closing Date for Regional Open Water Championships or nominated Scottish Swimming or Swim Wales Entries: 12 noon, Wednesday 15 July 2026.**
  11. The distances at the National Championships **may be longer than those at the Regional Championships** for each Age Group. Groups and Distances for the National Championships are Female and Open/Male:
    - i. 13yrs – 3km
    - ii. 14yrs – 5km
    - iii. 15yrs – 5km
    - iv. 16yrs – 7.5km
    - v. 17/18 – 7.5km
    - vi. 19+ – 7.5km
  12. Ages as at: 31 December 2026.
  13. Entry Fee to be detailed within the event Entry Pack.
  14. By entering this event, Competitors consent to report to Doping Control if requested at any time during this event. Competitors also agree to abide by Aquatics GB & UKAD Anti-Doping Rules. (For further information, see [Link.](#))
  15. The Female category is for birth sex females in accordance with Swim England's Transgender and Non-Binary Competition Policy. By entering the 'Female' category, a competitor confirms that their birth sex is female.
  16. An athlete declaration must be made at the time of entry (through the online entry system) and again on paper on the day of the event.
  17. Registration: competitors **MUST** sign in at the registration desk at the appropriate time.
  18. Any competitor representative (coach/ team manager/ chaperone) not attending the briefing may result in the competitor **NOT** being allowed to swim.
  19. Competitors must have their competitor number displayed on their back or upper arms **AND WEAR THE ELECTRONIC CHIP AND/OR WRIST BAND PROVIDED**. When wetsuits are in use, only the hands and hat will be numbered.
  20. A cut off time limit shall apply as follows from the finish time of the first competitor: 3k and 5k – 30 minutes, 7.5k – 60 minutes. Competitors who do not finish the course within the time limit shall be removed from the water, however, the chief referee may allow a competitor outside of the time limit to complete the course.

# NATIONAL AGE GROUP CHAMPIONSHIPS

21. A feeding platform will be available for 7.5k races only and, if used by a competitor, coaches are to provide the feeding poles and sustenance abiding by the following:
  - i. Feeding poles are not to exceed 5m in length when extended.
  - ii. Coaching and the giving of instructions by the competitor's coach on the feeding platform is permitted. No whistle shall be allowed.
  - iii. No objects can be thrown from the feeding platform to the competitors, including sustenance. The competitors shall receive their feeding in biodegradable containers directly from their coach by a feeding pole.
22. As per World Aquatics Rules (Part Three, Article 10, see [here](#)):
  - i. Water temperature below 18°C, competitors must wear: a wetsuit and start the race wearing one (1) cap or two (2) caps and may wear goggles. Only one swimsuit may be worn underneath the wetsuit.
  - ii. Water temperature from 18.0°C or above, competitors must wear: one (1) swimsuit in one or two pieces (not a wetsuit, subject to clause 22.iii); must start the race wearing one (1) cap or two (2) caps and may wear goggles. A competitor may wear a nose clip and/or use earplugs.
  - iii. If the water temperature is between 18.0°C and 20.0°C, and the Event Management, upon recommendation from the Safety Officer and Medical Officer, may determine that conditions are hazardous for the competitors, who will then be required to compete in wetsuits.
23. No competitor shall be permitted to use or wear any device, which may be an aid to their speed, endurance or buoyancy.
24. Grease: competitors shall be allowed to use grease or other substances providing these are not deemed as excessive, in the opinion of the Referee.
25. At the start and during the race, competitors must have trimmed fingernails and toenails and must not wear any jewelry, including watches.
26. Medals will be awarded to the first three Swim England competitors in Open/Male and Female categories, in each of the age groups listed in clause 11. Commemorative medals will be awarded to Overseas competitors placing first in an event.
27. An award will be made to the Top Club based on points scoring.
28. Safety and Conditions:
  - i. Water temperature will be monitored in the run up to the National Championships.
  - ii. The water temperature should be a minimum of 16.0°C and a maximum of 31.0°C.
  - iii. On the day of the National Championships, prior to the start of the competition, the course will be inspected and water temperature measured, in the presence of a coach, to ensure all of the safety requirements are met and the conditions are suitable for staging the National Championships.
  - iv. Reasonable modifications may be made to the course or the manner in which the National Championships is conducted based on the conditions at the time.
  - v. A Medical Officer will be appointed. The Medical Officer will be responsible to the Event Management Team for all medical aspects relating to the Competition and competitors.
  - vi. The Medical Officer, with the Safety Officer, will advise the Event Management Team if they consider that conditions are unsuitable for running the competition, making recommendations for modifying the course or the way the event is to be raced.
  - vii. The requirements of World Aquatics regarding Water Analysis Reports at defined intervals shall not apply to this Competition. The venue shall confirm water suitability direct to Swim

# NATIONAL AGE GROUP CHAMPIONSHIPS

England prior to competition taking place.

29. Cancellation and Abandonment:

- i. If the conditions are deemed to be unsuitable and not safe at the National Championships, a decision may be made to cancel or abandon the National Championships.
- ii. In the case of cancellation or abandonment, full refunds of entry fees to the National Championships will be offered to all competitors.
- iii. In the case of cancellation or abandonment, no refunds will be offered for any other expenses incurred in relation to the National Championships.