

Swimming Domestic Competition Plan

2023-2024 Season Explanatory Notes



Swimming Domestic Competition Plan (2023-2024 Season)

Please consider the content of this document alongside the associated 2023-2024 Season Plan

Galas

The emphasis for galas is on 'fun' in individual and/or relay swimming. If prizes are to be awarded, they are for participation rather than awards for first, second and third positions within a race. The focus is on club/team representation and athletes compete for a finishing position which provides their club/team with a point score towards a club/team accumulative score

Meets

The emphasis for meets is on individual/relay performance for a time and a finishing position. Meets will usually swim consolidated heats with outcomes declared from either a Heat Declared Winner basis (HDW) or from athletes qualifying for finals from heat swims

General

All Swim Ireland competitions are open to all Swim Ireland registered members subject to relevant qualification criteria as applicable. At National Meets, specific qualification criteria are available for athletes with disabilities. Clubs and Regions should make reasonable adjustments to include athletes with disabilities at their meets.

In all cases, coaches should ensure athletes meet an adequate standard to enter any competition

All competitions (other than schools' competitions or Inter/Intra Club Galas) to be age classified as of 31st December within the year in question. The plan follows a sequential swimming development model in age bands as follows:

- Intra-Club Galas from 7 years upwards. Such galas can be organised on 'blank' weekends on the season plan
- Inter-Club Galas from 8 years upwards (other than the Swim Ireland Christmas Cracker Gala which will be from 7 years upwards). Such galas can be organised on 'blank' weekends on the season plan
- Club Invitational/Open Meets from 9 years upwards. Such meets are predominantly to be utilised for entry into the Future Challenger Series and/or the Aspiring Champions Series. However, they may also be used to qualify for Regional Championships and National Meets subject to licencing requirements. Such meets can be organised on 'blank' weekends on the season plan
- Regional Skills Challenge (In-house) from 8 to 12 years in the year that the season starts i.e. in the 2023-2024 season, athletes born 2015 to 2011 are eligible to participate in such competitions
- Regional Future Challenger Series from 10 to 14 years (see notes on page 3)
- Regional Aspiring Champions Series from 13 years upwards
- Regional Age Group & Senior LC Championships and Irish Summer National Championships (50m) from 12 years upwards
- Regional SC Championships, Irish Winter National Championships (25m) and Irish Open Championships (50m) from 13 years upwards

Swim Ireland Tech Suit Policy

Athletes aged 12 years old and younger (age as that prescribed by each meet's entry conditions) will not be permitted to compete in a tech suit in any swimming competition which falls under the jurisdiction of Swim Ireland – all Swim Ireland licensed/sanctioned meets on the island of Ireland. The following statement must be added to the meet conditions/information for all competitions in Ireland:

"Athletes aged 12 years and younger (age as defined in the meet conditions) will not be permitted to compete at this meet in a tech suit. A tech suit is defined as any male or female swimsuit manufactured using fabric with water-repellent properties or using any bonded or taped seams regardless of its fabric. Athletes aged 12 years and under will be disqualified if officials observe such an athlete competing in a tech suit."

The full policy is available [here](#).

Definition of Qualifying/Consideration Times

- When an athlete achieves a Qualifying Time set within the parameters of a particular set of meet conditions, such an athlete is guaranteed entry into this event
- When an athlete achieves a Consideration Time set within the parameters of a particular set of meet conditions, such an athlete will be considered for entry into this event. Meet managers will make their decisions based on entry numbers and cut off accordingly per event
- When an athlete does not achieve a Qualifying/Consideration Time set within the parameters of a particular set of meet conditions, such an athlete will NOT be considered for entry into this event

Annual Season

- The season will be defined as the period 01/09/23 – 31/08/24
- The National Performance Director (NPD) will provide a required Programme of Events for all National and Regional Championship Meets
- The Head of Performance Pathways & Operations (HPPO) will provide a Programme of Events for the Future Challenger and the Aspiring Champions Meets. However, each Region may adjust the order of events to suit their needs
- The NPD (in consultation with the Performance Advisory Group) will write the Qualifying Times for all National Championships. Each Region will write their own Qualifying and/or Consideration times for Regional events based on the demographic of their athletes

Short Course Season (Period 1)

- All events to be competed in short course pools only in the period 01/09/23 – 31/12/23
- The Regional culmination of the short course season will be each Regional SC Championships
- The National culmination of the short course season will be the Irish Winter National Championships (25m)
- The International culmination of the short course season will be the World Aquatics or LEN European Championships (25m)

Long Course Season (Period 2)

- Events to be competed (as much as possible) in long course pools in the period 01/01/24 – 31/08/24
- The Regional culmination of the long course season will be each Regional Age Group & Senior LC Championships
- The National culmination of the long course season will be the McCullagh International for Junior athletes and the Irish Open Championships for Senior athletes in the first training cycle and the Irish Summer National Championships in the second training cycle
- The International culmination of the long course season will be the McCullagh International for Junior athletes and the Irish Open Championships for Senior athletes in the first training cycle and the benchmark summer international meet in the second training cycle. In 2023-2024, this is the Olympic Games or the LEN European Championships (50m) for senior athletes and the LEN European Junior Championships for junior athletes

Full Time National Centre Athletes

- On an individual basis, such athletes may enter a Regional Championships either within the Region in which their National Centre is based or in the Region of their home club
- Such athletes who enter a Regional Championships within the Region in which their National Centre is based (where this is a different Region to that of their home club), such athletes will be eligible to compete in heats and/or finals but will not be eligible to win medals from within that Region
- Such athletes may only compete in one Region's Championships during the SC season and one Region's Championships in the LC season. The selected Region for the LC season may be different to that of the SC season

Regional Skills Challenge (In-House)

- The Skills Challenge will provide feedback to young athletes based on their improvement over time in five predefined competitive aquatic skills
- The Challenge is open to all registered members aged 8 to 12 years in the year that the season starts i.e. in the 2023-2024 season, athletes born 2015 to 2011 are eligible to participate
- In House Assessments can take place within any number of sessions during each term (September to December, January to April and May to July)
- Clubs may choose to run these in silo or in partnership with other clubs
- Clubs will submit the athlete's best results from each term to their respective Regional Pathway Development Coach and collated results will be produced
- Athletes will receive a certificate each term as a record of their score and their progression over time

Regional Future Challenger Series

- The series will be delivered in two rounds with two meets per round (four meets in total)
- Regions may choose to split their clubs into two venues and run each meet on the same or separate days within each window of opportunity
- No qualifying or consideration times are required to enter these meets
- The Future Challenger Series is open to all competitive members aged 10 to 14 years but athletes aged 13/14 years may enter if they have not previously competed at the Aspiring Champions level or above and cannot compete at the Aspiring Champions Series in the same cycle i.e. the short course or long course season
- Meet formats will be provided to the Regions by the Head of Performance Pathways & Operations (HPPO). However, each Region can adjust the order of events to suit their needs
- Regions may decide to limit the number of entries per athlete and/or the number of relay entries per club
- Times achieved by athletes aged 12 years only in the 200m Freestyle, 100m Backstroke, 100m Breaststroke and 100m Butterfly will allow them to enter all available events in the corresponding stroke at the Regional Age Group & Senior LC Championships provided they are within the qualification period for that meet
- Regions may accept entries from athletes/clubs outside of Ireland but Irish clubs/athletes may only compete in their own Region (unless two or more Regions merge to run such an event) and such events should be considered as 'Closed' in this sense

Regional Aspiring Champions Series

- The series will be delivered as two 2-day meets – one short course meet in October and one long course meet in February or March
- The Aspiring Champions Series will be open to all competitive members aged 13 years & over
- Meet formats will be provided to the Regions by the HPPO. However, each Region can adjust the order of events to suit their needs
- These meets may have Consideration Time standards for entry into the longer events to manage meet timelines. Club time trial results, signed off by the Head Coach, can be accepted for entry into these events
- Any meet can be utilised for entry and LC/SC conversions will be accepted
- Regions may decide to limit the number of entries per athlete and/or the number of relay entries per club
- Times achieved can be used to enter Regional and National Championship events provided they are within the qualification period for each respective meet and in the required pool format (SC or LC)
- Regions may accept entries from athletes/clubs outside of Ireland but Irish clubs/athletes may only compete in their own Region (unless two or more Regions merge to run such an event) and such events should be considered as 'Closed' in this sense

Regional SC Championships

- The schedule of events shall be set by the NPD
- 2, 2.5 or 3-day competition with all four Regions running this event over one of two specified weekends. Regions may merge for this competition if required
- Age Groups as 13-16, 17/18, and 19 & over
- Age groups for meet qualification purposes only
- Qualifying Times and Consideration Times to both be utilised to allow maximising entries for meet managers
- SC Qualification times (plus LC conversions) may be used for entry. Any suitably licensed onshore or similarly licensed offshore meet can be utilised for entry

Swimming Domestic Competition Plan

2023-2024 Season Explanatory Notes



- Full Olympic programme of individual events plus 50m Form Strokes and 100m IM
- Four relay events to be Single Gender 200m Freestyle & 200m Medley relays and Mixed Gender 200m Freestyle & 200m Medley relays (two male/two female)
- One Open Final or 'A' and 'B' Open Finals ONLY (for the fastest qualifiers irrespective of age) for all events other than relays and 400m/800m/1500m (Heat Declared Winner events)
- Times achieved can be used to enter the Irish Winter National Championships (25m) and the McCullagh International Meet
- Regions may accept entries from athletes/clubs outside of Ireland but Irish clubs/athletes may only compete in their own Regional SC Championships (unless two or more Regions merge for this competition) and such events should be considered as 'Closed' in this sense

Regional Age Group & Senior LC Championships

- The schedule of events shall be set by the NPD
- Up to four days of competition with all four Regions running this event over one or two weekends in the designated window; the Championships shall be a meet of three days (if one weekend is used) or 2 x two days (if two weekends are used). Regions may merge if required
- Age Groups as 12 years, 13/14 years, 15/16 years and 17 years & over
- Qualifying Times and Consideration Times to both be utilised to allow the maximising of entries for meet managers
- LC Qualification times (plus SC conversions) may be used for entry. Any suitably licensed onshore or similarly licensed offshore meet can be utilised for entry
- Full Olympic programme of individual events for all age groups plus 50m Form Strokes for 15/16 years and 17 years & over only
- Mixed gender 200m Medley and 200m Freestyle relay events for athletes aged 12 years (two male/two female)
- All Olympic relay events, mixed and per gender (age as 13-14 years and 15 years & over)
- Finals in each age group for all events other than relays and 400m/800m/1500m (Heat Declared Winner events)
- Times achieved can be used to enter the Irish Summer National Age Group Championships (50m) or Irish Summer National Youth & Senior Championships (50m)
- Regions may accept entries from athletes/clubs outside of Ireland but Irish clubs/athletes may only compete in their own Regional LC Championships (unless two or more Regions merge for this competition) and such events should be considered as 'Closed' in this sense

Regional Swim Festival

- One or two-day competition with all four Regions running this event over one specified weekend. Regions may merge for this competition if required
- End of season event for athletes who did not qualify for one of the Irish Summer National Championships
- Regions may accept entries from athletes/clubs outside of their own Region (from any Region who chooses not to host this event) and from outside of Ireland and such events should be considered as 'Open' in this sense. Regions should write criteria into their own Qualifying Meet Regulations which gives preferential entry conditions to athletes from their own Region, with entries from other Regions accepted on a 'top-up' basis

Irish Winter National Championships (25m)

- Three-day competition and the schedule of events shall be set by the NPD
- Age Groups: 13-16 years, 17/18 years and 19 & over (for meet qualification purposes only)
- SC Consideration Times and Hytek converted LC times
- Qualification Window 01/12/22 to 26/11/23
- Open event (conditional)
- Level 3 Club Open Meets organised by Irish Clubs and Offshore meets in the period above which meet similar standards may be nominated in advance to Swim Ireland as a Qualification meet
- Full Olympic programme of individual events plus 50m Form Strokes and 100m IM
- Four relay events to be Single Gender 200m Freestyle & 200m Medley relays and Mixed Gender 200m Freestyle & 200m Medley relays (two male/two female)
- 'A', 'B', 'C' Finals for 50m, 100m, 200m and 400m Olympic events
- 'A' Finals for 50m Form Strokes and 100m IM
- HDW 800m/1500m Freestyle

McCullagh International Meet (50m)

- Four-day competition. Irish Trials for Junior International selections with the schedule of events set by the NPD
- The meet will run the Heats sessions in the morning/afternoon and Finals sessions in the evening. The heat sessions will be run as fastest heats in the morning followed by the slowest heats in the afternoon
- Age Groups: 13/14 years, 15/16 years, 17/18 years, 19 & over
- Age groups for meet qualification purposes only
- LC Consideration Times and Hytek converted SC times
- Qualification Window 01/07/23 to 11/03/24
- Open event (conditional)
- Level 3 Club Open Meets organised by Irish Clubs and Offshore meets in the period above which meet similar standards may be nominated in advance to Swim Ireland as a Qualification meet
- Full Olympic programme of individual events plus 50m Form Strokes for Junior/Senior athletes
- Age Group (13/14 years) athletes may qualify via the 200m Freestyle, 200m Backstroke, 200m Breaststroke, 200m Butterfly, 200m IM and 400m Freestyle individual events. Athletes entering the 200m stroke events may enter the corresponding 100m event and athletes achieving the 200m IM qualifying time may enter the 400m IM.
- All 'Open' Olympic relay events mixed and per gender and to be classed as the 'National Relay Titles' for 2024
- 'Junior/Open A', 'Junior/Open B' and 'Age Group' for eligible events other than relays and 800m/1500m events (Heat Declared Winner events)

Irish Open Championships (50m)

- Five-day competition. Irish Trials for International selections with the schedule of events set by the NPD
- Age Groups: 13-16 years, 17/18 years and 19 & over (for meet qualification purposes only)
- Open event (conditional)
- LC Qualification times only – no SC or SC conversions
- Qualification window 01/07/23 – 14/04/24
- Level 3 Long Course Club Open Meets organised by Irish Clubs and Offshore meets in the periods above which meet similar standards may be nominated in advance to Swim Ireland as a Qualification meet
- Full Olympic programme of individual events plus 50m Form Strokes
- Open 'A', Open 'B', Junior and Super Finals in 50m Freestyle, 100m and 200m events
- Open 'A' and Open 'B' Finals in 50m Form Strokes
- Junior and Open 'A' Finals in 400m events
- Open 'A' Finals in 800m/1500m Freestyle

Irish Summer National Age Group Championships (50m)

- Four-day LC competition and the schedule of events shall be set by the NPD
- Age Groups as 12 years, 13 years, 14 years
- Separate Qualifying Times for the three age groups per gender
- LC Qualification and Consideration Times and SC Consideration Times published, and both may be used for entry
- Level 3 Club Open Meets organised by Irish Clubs and Offshore meets in the period above which meet similar standards may be nominated in advance to Swim Ireland as a Qualification meet
- Qualification window 01/01/24 – 09/06/24
- Full Olympic programme of individual events
- Mixed gender 200m Medley and 200m Freestyle relay events for athletes aged 12 years
- All Olympic relay events, mixed and per gender (ages as 13/14 years)
- "A" and "B" Finals where 21 or more athletes compete in the heats in the 50m, 100m and 200m events
- "A" Finals only in the 400m events
- Relays and 800m/1500m will be Heat Declared Winner events

Swimming Domestic Competition Plan

2023-2024 Season Explanatory Notes



Irish Summer National Youth & Senior Championships (50m)

- Five-day competition and the schedule of events shall be set by the NPD
- Age Groups as Male 15, 16, 17/18, 19 & over; Female 15, 16/17, 18 & over
- Open event (conditional)
- Separate Qualifying Times for the four male and three female age groups
- LC Qualification and Consideration Times **only** – no SC times or SC conversions
- Level 3 LC Club Open Meets organised by Irish Clubs and Offshore meets in the periods above which meet similar standards may be nominated in advance to Swim Ireland as a Qualification meet
- Qualification window 01/01/24 – 09/06/24
- Full Olympic programme of individual events plus 50m Form Strokes
- All Olympic relay events (15 years & over)
- “A” and “B” Finals where 21 or more athletes compete in the heats in the 50m, 100m and 200m events
- “A” Finals only in the 400m events
- Relays and 800m/1500m will be Heat Declared Winner events

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