

Stockport Metro



Competition Guide / Handbook

Competitions

It is important for both swimmers and parents to understand the various types of swimming competitions in the UK, especially when you are starting your swimming journey. This knowledge is essential to help swimmers develop their skills, set goals, train effectively and prepare for higher levels of competition.

At Stockport Metro our goal is to be a **leader in the development of performance swimming** with a **world class pathway and experience for every swimmer, at every level, from beginners to Olympians.** At every part of this pathway there are competitions to suit the age and ability of every swimmer, whether a beginner or and Olympian. These include:

- Race nights and development meets which we run internally.
- Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4 open competitions, which are local and regional meets designed to help swimmers gain experience and improve their times.
- More competitive meets such as Counties, Regionals, and English Nationals which provide opportunities for swimmers to compete against some of the best swimmers in Cheshire, the North West or England.
- At the top levels of the club we also aim to help swimmers qualify for the British Nationals and British Championships, which are the highest levels of competition in the UK.
- Beyond this there are opportunities to race for your country and Junior International competitions such as European Juniors or World Juniors.

Team Competitions

In addition to these individual meets, we also compete in two team competitions, the National Arena League for swimmers aged 11+ and the Junior Arena League for swimmers aged 9-12. We will also enter relay teams in the Regional competitions to aim to qualify for the national competitions. It is an honour to be selected for Stockport Metro and we expect any swimmers selected to be able to race.

Competitions Flow Chart

Junior International Meets

- European Juniors
- World Junior Games
- Commonwealth Youth Games

National Meets

- British Championships (April)
- British Summer Championships (selection of top 24 in country)
- English Summer Championships (selection of next 20 in country)
- Open Water Nationals
- Short Course Winter Nationals (December)

County and Regional Meets

- Swim England North West Summer Regional Championships (split into Age Group aged 11-14 and Youth aged 15+)
- Swim England North West Winter Short Course
- Cheshire County Championships

Open Meets

- Level 1,2,3 and 4 Open Meets
- Stockport Short Course Open – November
- Stockport Long Course Open – Spring

Internal and Development Meets

- Wolfpack Series – for clubs swimmers to get times
- Race Nights – for Academy and JD1
- Club Championships

Team Selections

- Inter county championships selection for Cheshire
- English Schools North West (ESSAS)

Stockport Metro Team Selections

- Arena League (swimmers aged 11+)
- Junior Arena League (swimmers aged 9-12)
- Regional and National Relay teams

Types of Meet Explained

Level 1 Open Meets

These meets are Long course (LC) only which means they are swam in a 50m pool. These competitions have qualifying times to enter and the times swam at these competitions can be used to qualify for Regional and National Championships.

Level 2 Open Meets

These meets are Short Course (SC) only which means they are swam in a 25m pool. These competitions have qualifying times and they are generally County Championships and other Open Meets. The times swam in these competitions can be used for entry into National and Regional Championships.

Level 3 Open Meets

These meets can be held in both LC and SC formats. These competitions will generally use qualifying times and also upper limit times (not faster than). This is to ensure that the meet stays as a development meet for up and coming and younger swimmers. Some level 3 meets also accept unlicensed times for the entry which could be timed by a coach at training (This is generally down to the discretion of the meet organiser).

Level 4 Internal Meets

Level 4 swim meets are competitions organised for swimmers who are registered under Stockport Metro. Level 4 swim meets offer our swimmers a chance to gain competition experience and post times on the Swim England database for entry into higher level competitions. These times can then be used as qualifying times for higher level competitions, such as Level 3, Counties, and beyond. As a registered member of Stockport Metro, swimmers are eligible to participate in Level 4 swim meets such as the Wolfpack Series and Club Championships and benefit from the opportunity to gain valuable competition experience.

County Championships (Cheshire's)

Cheshire County holds yearly swimming competitions exclusively for swimmers who swim at a club within the county. To participate in the competitions, swimmers must meet certain qualifying times in previous competitions. The Counties competitions provide a platform for swimmers to showcase their skills and compete against others in their local area. By competing in these events, swimmers have the opportunity to gain valuable experience at county level. You can visit the County website here [Cheshire County Water Polo and Swimming Association – Representing Swimmers throughout Cheshire County \(swimcheshire.org\)](http://Cheshire County Water Polo and Swimming Association – Representing Swimmers throughout Cheshire County (swimcheshire.org))

Swim England North West Regional Championships

SE North West Regionals Championships are held for swimmers who reside in the North West region of the UK. To participate in the North West Regionals, swimmers must achieve specific qualifying times in previous competitions. The region holds a Short Course Championships usually in November and an Long Course Championships in Spring/Summer. The LC championships are split into Age Group (age 11-14) and Youth (age 15+). This event provides a unique opportunity for swimmers to showcase their skills and compete against other talented swimmers in the region.

Swim England Summer National Championships

The SE Summer Nationals is an annual national-level swimming competition held in the England. It is held during the summer months and is open to swimmers by invitation only through the national qualifying window (see below). The top 25-44 top-ranked English swimmers in each event in each age category invited to attend.

British Swimming Summer National Championships

The British Summer swimming Nationals is an annual national-level swimming competition held in the United Kingdom. It is held during the summer months and is open to swimmers by invitation only through the national qualifying window (see below). The top 24 top-ranked swimmers in each event in each age category invited to attend, except for the 800m and 1500m Freestyle swimmers, where the top 18 athletes will be invited. Relays will also be selected from performances from the Regional Championships.

British Swimming Championships

British Championships are the highest level of competition in the UK. The competition is typically held in the Spring and features swimmers who have achieved qualifying times in previous competitions. The British Swimming Championships is considered to be one of the most prestigious swimming events in the UK, and it serves as a qualifying event for international competitions such as the Olympics and the World Championships. The event is highly anticipated by swimmers and spectators alike, and it plays an essential role in promoting and developing competitive swimming in the United Kingdom.

Open Water

Open Water is now a major part of our swimming calendar and we want to see swimmers follow in the footsteps of our Olympic Open Water medallists Keri-Anne Payne and Cassie Patten.

Open Water season starts in the Spring and we compete at the Regional Championships and National Championships if selected. Swimmers will have access to training at Sale Water Park but must have their own wetsuits.

Stockport Metro Meets

As a club, we also run our own meets to give swimmers the opportunities to race and gain times. These include, Race Nights, Wolfpack Series, Club Championships, Autumn Level 2 Short Course Meet, Spring Level 1 Long Course Meet.

Race Nights

Race nights take place usually every month for swimmers in Academy and Junior Development 1. Swimmers race over 25m (and sometimes 50m) to gain experience in racing and aim to achieve Bronze, Silver and Gold times. We also reward swimmers who show great skills and award skill awards for those who impress the coaches. We record all times and whilst they are not official, we use them to monitor progress and pick junior teams. It also gives our parents the first taste of competition and we invite them to help with timekeeping.

Wolfpack Series

The Wolfpack series is a set of time trials that are designed for swimmers in Academy 3 and above. The purpose of these trials is to provide a competitive environment for our swimmers to improve their racing skills and give them added incentive to attend their training sessions and work hard. By participating in the Wolfpack Series, swimmers have the opportunity to put their training into practice and gain experience in competitive racing.

Club Championships

The Club Championships takes place annually. Swimmers will race across a number of different event categories and aim to win the title of 'Club Champion' for their age. Trophies and medals will be awarded to each age group at the annual Club Presentation Night.

Event Rankings

Swim England have a database where you can search for where you are ranked in the country (or region or county). You can also search for you name to find out all your best times and progressions.

Click the link below to take you to this.

[Event Rankings \(All Time\) | Swim England \(swimmingresults.org\)](https://www.swimmingresults.org)

Club Rankings

Ever wondered where you rank in Stockport Metro. You can check out the overall rankings and age group rankings on our website. Click the link below to take you to this.

[All Time Club Rankings | Stockport Metro \(stockportmetrosc.org.uk\)](https://www.stockportmetrosc.org.uk)

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know what to enter?

At the start of the season (and updated times throughout) we will send out a competition calendar. This will have all the competitions and dates. Swimmers should only enter competitions that have been assigned for their squad and only enter competitions on the calendar.

Swimmers are always encouraged to enter a range of events and strokes. You should always speak to your coach about this but as a guide we would like swimmers to be entering the following:

- Age 10 and Under – 50 and 100 events of all strokes + 100 and 200 IM
- Age 11-16 – All events including 800/1500, IMS and 200s. At Stockport Metro we want to see our swimmers racing in more distance and IM events during these age group years
- Age 17+ - more specialisation of events

What age are you at competitions?

For many competitions (especially County/Regional/National), swimmers will compete in the age group that they will be on the 31st December of that year. This means that all swimmers born in the same year will be racing against each other.

For many open meets, you will compete as the age that you are at the end of the meet. Therefore you will race against swimmers your own age (not necessarily year of birth).

What is LC and SC?

Simply put LC = Long Course (50m pool) and SC = Short Course (25m pool). Whilst swim manager will automatically convert times for us, you can also do it via this website [Time Conversions | pullbuoy](#)

What Is Age Group and Youth?

Age Group usually refers to swimmers aged 11-14 and Youth is for swimmers age 15+. Some meets will split into these 2 age group categories.

What is the National Qualifying Window?

To qualify for the Summer Nationals you need to qualify within a specific time frame. This is usually between March and May but will be set by British Swimming. Swimmers compete in Level 1 meets in this window to get times for the rankings. Swimmers will be invited to the British Summer Championships if they are in the top 24 in the country and English Summer Championships if they are in the next 20 English swimmers.

Why are you always asking for officials and helpers?

For competitions to run, we need a set number of timekeepers, judges and referees. You need to be qualified to do this but we always need new people to get involved. Timekeeping is a simple course and you can work your way up from there (and it beats sitting in the stands). To get involved please email Jackie Beard Jones at officials@stockportmetrosc.co.uk

We also need none qualified help at competitions so please come forwards and support your club when asked.

Entering Competitions - Swim Manager Entries

If you are eligible to enter a competition you will receive an email inviting you to enter by a certain deadline.

To enter a swimming competition using Swim Manager, follow these steps:

1. Log in to your Swim Manager account. If you don't have an account yet, you can create one by following the instructions on the Swim Manager website. [Swim Manager - Login](#)
2. Navigate to the "Events" or "Competitions" section of your account.
3. Search for the competition you want to enter. You can filter your search results by location, date, and type of competition.
4. Once you have found the competition, click on it to view more details about the event, including the entry requirements, eligibility criteria, and entry fees.
5. If you meet the eligibility criteria and want to enter the competition, click on the "Enter Now" or "Register" button.
6. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete the entry form, which will typically ask you to provide your personal and contact information, as well as your swimming times and any other relevant details.
7. Pay the entry fee using the payment method provided by Swim Manager. You may be asked to provide your credit card or bank account information to complete the payment.
8. Submit your entry form and wait for confirmation from Swim Manager that your entry has been accepted. You may receive an email confirmation or see a notification in your Swim Manager account dashboard.
9. Attend the competition on the specified date and time, and follow any additional instructions provided by the event organisers or Swim Manager.
10. If you encounter any issues or have questions about the entry process, you can contact Swim Manager's customer support team for assistance.

What Should Swimmers do at Competition?

1. Arrive on time: Swimmers should arrive at the competition venue at least 30 minutes before the start of warm-up to give themselves enough time to start their pre-pool routine, warm up, and prepare mentally for the competition.
2. Complete an effective warm-up: Swimmers should warm up before their event to prepare their muscles and get their heart rate up. This will help them perform better and reduce the risk of injury.
3. Listen to coaches and officials: Swimmers should listen to their coaches and meet officials.
4. Stay hydrated: Swimmers should drink plenty of water and stay hydrated throughout the competition to avoid cramps and fatigue.
5. Stay focused: Swimmers should stay focused on their events and avoid distractions, this will help them perform at their best and stay in the zone.
6. Perform to the best of their abilities: Swimmers should give their best effort during their events and aim to achieve their personal best times. Winning is undoubtedly important, but the ultimate goal should be to achieve personal best times and improve their skills. Swimmers should work on refining their techniques, such as perfecting their starts and turns.
7. Support teammates: Swimmers should support their teammates and cheer them on during their events. This will create a positive team environment and help everyone perform better. We love to have all our swimmers stay to cheer on teammates, especially in finals.
8. Reflect on the performance: After the competition, swimmers should reflect on their performance, identify areas for improvement, and set new goals with their coach for the future. This will help them continue to grow and develop as swimmers.
9. Wear full Stockport Metro team kit: Professional swimmers should wear their full Stockport Metro team kit to show their team pride and create a sense of unity within the team.
10. Be a great person: Say thank you to your officials and coaches at the end of the meet and TIDY UP your litter before you go home