

### Swimmer Classification

The governing body for swimming in England is Swim England (SE) and Hounslow Jets SC is affiliated to SE so all our swimmers, coaches, officials, and helpers are all registered members. SE will provide an SE number for the athlete and insurance cover for the members and give access to various National Events and Talent Camps. Members are allocated into one of three categories:

#### Category 1

Young swimmers in Learn to Swim programmes are registered in category 1. Category 1 membership provides insurance whilst the swimmer is at training but won't allow a swimmer to compete at an event.

#### Category 2

Swimmers who train with our competitive squads need to be registered as category 2 swimmers. This category of membership provides access to the swimming rankings system and offers insurance to swimmers at training, club events and competitions.

#### Category 3

Category 3 membership is for parents, helpers and volunteers.

### Membership

As Members of Swim England, fees are payable to the National governing body to provide the insurance for the swimmer. Hounslow Jets collect this fee on behalf of the SE, which is included within the Annual Membership of Hounslow Jets SC. The national annual renewal occurs in February, so all swimmers, even those who have started mid-year will have to renew their annual membership then.

### Swimmer Age

For a swimmer to compete at an event, they will usually have to be at least 9 years of age, either on the last day of the competition or by the end of the year (depending on the licence granted for that event). When swimmers are of the age, coaches will discuss with the swimmer when it will be appropriate to enter events.

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# Competitions

## Guide to Meets

### HJSC Competition Calendar

The Hounslow Jets Head Coach will lay out a season competition plan with the coaches that will be most appropriate for the swimmers and fits in with the training cycles. Swimmers and their families are expected to adhere to the Head Coach's season plan as part of their commitment to the training programme and Hounslow Jets. Unauthorised meets/ competitions could jeopardise the swimmer's place in a squad.

### Types of Swimming Competition

**County/ Regional/ National events;** Swimmers ultimately aspire to test themselves against the best in the sport, so will seek to target entries into County, Regional, National standards and beyond, in their careers. County and Regional entries can be made, subject to meeting minimum Qualifying Times (QTs), from the age of 9. (County competitions can be entered from age 10 (age taken from the end of year in which the competition takes place) and Regional Competition from age 11). National events can be entered from the age of 12 for girls and 13 years for boys. Open Water Regional and National events are also available from the age of 12.

**League galas** are team events where the whole team competes against other clubs, gaining points for each race. League galas are usually made up of individual races and team/relay races for the different age groups. There are local leagues, as well as National ones too.

**Open Meets** are advertised by individual clubs and are licenced meets for anyone who is eligible to take part. Qualifying times vary per Level of event. These events are individual races with the fastest swimmers gaining medals/ trophies.

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### Long Course or Short Course?

Details of what 'course' a meet is will be on the meet information pack – usually described as LC or SC. Short Course meets are swum in a 25m pool (same as Brentford Fountain ) and Long Course meets are swum in a 50m pool. The Meet season is usually split into two halves – the first from September to the end of February are usually run Short Course and from March then revert to Long Course.

### What are licensed meets?

Licensed meets are swimming galas that comply with a standard set of SE licensing requirements. All times achieved at licensed meets are official and get published on a rankings database. The level of the meet can be used to identify the purpose of the competition:

**Level 4** is for those beginning to enter individual competitions. These competitions are generally hosted by a local club, usually with upper limit/No Faster Than times.

**Level 3** is again, for entry level swimmers. Entries generally have Upper limit/ No Faster Than times. Can be short course or long course. Times achieved here can be used for entry to Level 1 meets, regional and county championships

**Level 2** is aimed at Regional and National SC qualifiers and swimmers who are close to qualification. They require minimum qualifying times to enter.

**Level 1** is the highest level of competitive swimming aimed at National qualifiers and swimmers close to National qualification. They also provide opportunity to achieve international qualifying times. Always swum long course and will have quite tough minimum entry times.

**Please note: For level 1, 2 and 3 meets the swimmer needs to be registered with SE Category 2 membership.**

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### Qualifying times / Upper Limit Times / Cut off Times:

A **Qualifying Time** is the time that the swimmer must have already achieved in order to enter an event at the competition. For Level 1 and 2 Competitions, times are normally based on faster than times.

**Upper limit/cut off times** are times set by a competition organiser that a swimmer must be slower than to be able to swim at the competition. This normally applies for Level 3 Competitions.

Qualifying times or cut off times will be included in the competition meet pack so please look out for these and check before submitting an entry for your swimmer(s).

### Swimmers' Entry Times:

Swimmer's times are recorded on the National Swimming database <https://swimmingresults.org/> (simply enter the swimmer surname or membership number to locate their times). These times are updated after each competition and form the basis of qualification entry for future events. The database is a great tool to take a look at. It records every swim and provides graphs and other useful performance data. Event rankings, whether by Club, County, Regional or National can also be accessed on this site.

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### Which times can be used?

The meet pack for a given competition usually states whether (1) times need to have been achieved at licensed meet and appear on rankings and (2) how recently the times need to have been swum.

If this is ever unclear, please ask your coach or contact our competition secretary.

As a general rule, Most L3, L4, and friendly competitions will accept No Times if they don't appear on the rankings database.

L1, L2, County, Regional, and National events will always require times to have been achieved at licensed competitions and appear on the rankings database. Times for County and Regional event need to be swum in the relevant qualifying period even if they have been achieved beforehand. National qualification may be based on rankings or times depending on the competition.

### Time conversions

This is particularly relevant when you wish to enter a Long Course meet but only have Short Course times. At the majority of swim meets, time conversions are permitted from Short Course to Long Course or vice versa. The website, <http://www.pullbuoy.co.uk/times> has a tool which can convert these times, although SwimManager will do this for you. Pullbuoy sometimes differs by more than a few 100ths of a sec and it is only a guide.

### **Entering swimming competitions**

Entry packs will ordinarily be emailed to you by the meet manager. Please read through all documents (not just the entry form). Ensure you check age groups, what events your child can enter, and when they are taking place.

Determine whether a swimmer is eligible to enter the competition by checking the level and qualifying/ cut-off times associated with the competition – please ask your coach or the competition secretary if you are unsure. All Competition Entries should be discussed and agreed with your coach.

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## Guide to Meets

Entries will be processed through your SwimManager Account (see separate Guidance Document for using SwimManager). The entry form on Swim Manager will also show what events your swimmer can enter. Events must be paid for to confirm entry to the competition. We only accept Card payments (No extra charge) for entries.

### What happens to my entries?

When all of the entries for the Club are collated, the Competition Secretary will submit the whole batch to the host Club, or if it is our own Meet, will submit them to the Meet software.

All competitions will be limited to space and therefore, there is a possibility that not all entries/ events will be accepted into the competitions. The host Club will process all of the entries from visiting Clubs and populate the Meet.

Priority is not given to a host Club swimmers- all Meets are run under Licence and so must be fair in apportioning races based on Qualification criteria. Therefore, generally, if the event has Minimum QTs, then if it is oversubscribed, the slower qualifiers will be scratched and if the event has 'Upper Limits/ No Faster Than QTs, then the fastest swimmers would be scratched.

The host Club will send out a list of Accepted Entries to the visiting Clubs who will then distribute to its members. This will list which events your swimmer has been accepted for and which ones have been scratched due to being full. A briefing pack will then be distributed to the swimmers detailing protocol and detail for the day/ weekend.

Programmes are normally on sale and most Open Meets have access to live results. For Hounslow Jets Meets Races will be seeded by slowest swimmer to fastest and organised into specific lanes. The programme will begin with the slowest swimmers first through to the fastest. Results will be calculated in Age groups depending on the Competition conditions and usually, medals will be given out to the top 3 in each Age per event. Some events will have finals too, so the fastest 8/ 10 may get to compete in that too.

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**Team Competitions** are competitions where swimmers are selected to compete for the club as a team against other clubs, rather than individually. Swimmers will be selected to swim certain events for the best possible team outcome. A list of selected swimmers will be communicated, via email by the Lead Coach for the event. These are usually fun, noisy and competitive events which we encourage parents to shout and support their team in!

**If you are selected to swim for the club please make your best efforts to be available.**

### What to bring to a Competition

The following is a general guide of what to take to a competition:

- Two Towels
- Trunks/ Costumes (bring a spare)
- Goggles (Bring a spare set)
- Two HJSC swim hats (ideally race or bullet caps)
- HJSC uniform
- Poolside footwear such as flip flops, which can be worn off poolside- bare feet are not allowed off poolside as are shoes on poolside.
- Drinks and food- Bring at least two drinks as the poolside environment severely dehydrates swimmers. Food and snacks will need to be consumed to keep the energy levels up for multiple races.

Please contact the meet manager if you have any issues or questions here:

[meets@hounslowjets.org](mailto:meets@hounslowjets.org).

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