



## Competition Pathway

The National Performance Director introduced a new competition pathway in September 2017 which has ensured that competitions are streamlined throughout the country. This was a huge step forward and will continue to be a very positive step in Irish Swimming.

This document will explain the pathway from the time a swimmer begins their competitive career until they reach National level competition.

### **Ages:**

Swimmers ages will be defined as their age on 31<sup>st</sup> December of the year of the competition. (For example, a swimmer born in 2006 will swim as a 12-year-old during 2018 and a 13-year-old during 2019). This applies to all competitions except for schools which will be defined as 31<sup>st</sup> August of the school year and Inter/Intra club GALAs who can use age on day if preferred.

### **Time Standards:**

Qualifying Times: Where a meet has qualifying times, swimmers who have achieved these times will be accepted into that event.

Consideration Times: Where a meet has consideration times, swimmers who have achieved these times will be considered for entry into the event based on entry numbers. Swimmers who have not achieved either the qualifying or consideration times will not be accepted into the event.

Upper Cut Off Times: Where a meet has upper cut of times, swimmers must be SLOWER than the designated time to be accepted into the event.

### **Competition Types:**

Swim Ireland have introduced a Domestic Competition Plan which sets out the competitions to be held Regionally and Nationally throughout the year. These are classified as:

- (a) Intra-club GALA
- (b) Inter-club GALA
- (c) Club Invitational/Open MEET
- (d) Regional Development and Regional Qualifying Meets - these replace Graded galas as follows:
  - Regional Development Meet replacing Grade 2 & 3
  - Regional Qualifying Meet replacing Grade 1
- (e) Regional Championship and National Division 2 Meets
- (f) National Meets and National Championships

**(a) Intra-Club GALAs:**

- INTRA club galas are within one club

These GALAS are for swimmers **aged from 7 upwards** (age on day or year of birth). These galas are an introduction to competition and the emphasis of should be on FUN.

Swimmers might receive a participation ribbon/certificate etc.

Qualification standard: None

**(b) Inter-Club GALAs:**

- INTER club galas are more than one club

These GALAS are for swimmers **aged from 8 upwards** (age on day or year of birth). These galas are an introduction to competition and the emphasis of should be on FUN.

Swimmers receive points rather than medals and an overall award presented to the top club (maybe best team with less than 15 swimmers as another award)

Swimmers might receive a participation ribbon/certificate etc.

Qualification standard: None

**(c) Club Invitational/Open Meets:**

Swimmers **must be at least 9 years of age** to compete in these meets. Times achieved at these meets may be used for entry into Regional Development and Regional Qualifying meets. Club Open meets may be used for qualification to Regional Championships or National Championships, subject to them meeting specific meeting licence conditions.

Qualification standard: Defined by club – should be consideration standards to allow clubs keep within their session limits

**(d) Regional Development and Regional Qualifying Meets:**

Development Meets:

Swimmers **must be at least 10 years of age** to compete at these meets. In Development meets there will be no qualifying times but cut off times will be in force i.e. if a swimmer is faster than a cut off time they will not be eligible to compete in that event. All development meets will include 100m Ind. Medley. Times achieved at Development meets may be used for entry to Regional Qualification Meets.

Qualification standard: Upper cut off times

Qualification Meets:

Swimmers **must be at least 10 years of age** to compete at these meets. Swimmers must have achieved the published consideration standard to be considered for entry (see time standards above). Times achieved at these meets may be used for entry to Regional Championships and if achieved in a Long Course pool in the Long Course season (1<sup>st</sup> January – closing date) may be used for entry to the Irish Summer LC Nationals.

Qualification standard: Consideration times

### (e) Regional Championships

Regional SC Championships:

**Age Groups: Male 16 & Under, 17 & Over: Female 15 & Under, 16 & Over**

Swimmers must have achieved the relevant qualifying/consideration standards in Regional Qualifying meets. One final ONLY (with the fastest qualifiers irrespective of age). Times achieved at this meet may be used for entry to National SC Championships.

Qualification standard:

Qualifying and Consideration Times

Regional LC Championships:

**Age Groups: 11/12, 13/14, 15/16, 17 & Over**

Finals in each defined age group for all events with the exception of 400m 800m and 1500m events, which will be Heat Declared Finals. Entry times must have been achieved at Regional Development and Regional Qualifying meets or specific Club Open meets. Times achieved at this meet may be used for entry to Irish Summer LC Championships or National Division 2 Championships.

Qualification standard:

Qualifying and Consideration Times

### (f) National Championships

Irish SC Championships:

**Age Groups: Male 16&Under, 17&Over: Female 15&Under, 16&Over**

One final ONLY (with the fastest qualifiers irrespective of age). Junior awards will be presented at this meet (Male 16&U, Female 15&U). Short Course Times ONLY, LC times or LC conversions will NOT be accepted. Qualifying times must have been achieved between 1<sup>st</sup> December in the previous year and 6<sup>th</sup> November in the current year (or as per the meet conditions). "A" and "B" finals in all individual events with the exception of 800m and 1500m events.

Qualification standard:

Qualifying Times

Irish Open Swimming Championships:

**Age Groups: Male 15/16, 17/18, 19&Over: Female 14/15, 16/17, 18&Over** Age groups are for meet qualification purposes only. There will be no junior medals presented at this meet. Long Course Times ONLY, SC times or SC conversions will NOT be accepted. Qualifying times must have been achieved between 1<sup>st</sup> July in the previous year and 19<sup>th</sup> February in the current year. Open and Junior (Male 18&U, Female 17&U) finals in all individual events with the exception of 800m and 1500m events.

Qualification standard:

Qualifying Times

Irish Summer National Championships:

**Age Groups: 12/13, 14, 15, 16, 17&Over**

Long Course Times ONLY, SC times or SC conversions will NOT be accepted. Times achieved at Regional Qualifying LC meets, Regional Youth/Senior LC Championships or Regional Age Group LC Championships may be used for entry for this meet. LC qualification meets organised by Clubs can also be used. Finals will be held in each defined age group in all events with the exception of 800m and 1500m which will be heat declared winner.

Swimmers may **NOT** compete in National Division 2 Meet if they have qualified for this meet.

Qualification standard:

Qualifying Times

Irish National Division 2 Meet:

**Age Groups: 11/12, 13, 14, 15&Over**

This meet will be held as a SC meet. Entry times must have been achieved at Regional Development and Regional Qualifying meets or Club Open Meets. Qualifying and cut off times in each age group. The cut off time will be the qualifying time for the Irish Summer LC Championships. LC qualification times and SC conversions may be used for entry. Times must have been achieved between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 18<sup>th</sup> June in the year of competition (or as per the meet conditions). Finals will be held in each defined age group in all events with the exception of 800m and 1500m which will be heat declared winner.

Qualification standard:

Qualifying and Cut Off Times

A reminder that all swimmers must agree to the "Code of Conduct" and should abide by this. Swimmers who are in breach of the code will be reprimanded. Officials are volunteers who give of their time freely and should be treated with respect at all times.

Clubs attending Offshore meets may nominate these for qualification for Irish National Meets. Approval must be sought from Swim Ireland in advance of traveling and Hy-tek results must be sent after the meet.

Individual swimmers from clubs who are resident primarily overseas DO NOT need to seek approval from Swim Ireland for their meets however they should send their results to their home club and be prepared to send copies of the results to Swim Ireland on request.