



Guide to entering Independent Galas

Why Some Swimmers Enter Galas Independently

We completely understand that swimmers are often motivated to race more, whether to chase personal bests, gain race experience, qualify for higher-level meets, or simply enjoy the competition environment. These are all positive goals that show commitment and enthusiasm for the sport.

However, to ensure every swimmer develops in a safe, structured, and progressive way, it's important that all entries are communicated and coordinated with the coaching team in advance.

Why We Discourage Entries Outside the Club Calendar

The club's competition calendar is carefully designed to align with our training cycles, squad objectives, and long-term performance plans. Each gala is selected to:

- Support swimmers' technical and physical development.
- Ensure appropriate recovery and taper periods.
- Maximise opportunities for peak performance at key meets.

Unapproved entries outside this plan can:

- Disrupt carefully structured training and recovery phases.
- Increase the risk of fatigue, injury, or over-racing.
- Prevent coaches from providing on-the-day support, feedback, and TM safeguarding supervision.

Safeguarding and Supervision Requirements

Under Swim England's Wavepower (2024) guidance, no swimmer under 18 should be poolside or competing without appropriate, DBS-checked and qualified supervision.

For club-affiliated activities, this requires the presence of a licensed coach or team manager holding the relevant Swim England qualifications.

If a swimmer enters a gala independently, it becomes the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure all safeguarding, supervision, and duty-of-care requirements are in place. The club must be informed in advance so that we can verify this and confirm that the event is suitable and swimmers have the appropriate support in place. When multiple swimmers attend a gala through an independent entry just 3 swimmers will constitute a club entry.

When swimmers attend galas without prior approval, the club cannot confirm compliance with Swim England's supervision and safeguarding standards. This places both the swimmer and the club at risk of breaching Swim England Regulations and Wavepower guidance.

For this reason, *unsupervised or unapproved gala attendance is not permitted.*



Why Communication Is Essential

All gala entries, whether on or off the club calendar, should be reviewed and approved in advance to ensure that:

- All Swim England safeguarding and welfare standards are fully met.
- The gala and selected events are appropriate for the swimmer's age, ability, and current training phase.
- Coaches can account for this activity in training plans, provide gala race plans and tapering if possible and consider team selections that may conflict.
- We can maintain accurate records for team selections.

The coaching team appreciate everyone's enthusiasm and commitment to competition. By working together, we can ensure that racing opportunities are both safe and purposeful, helping swimmers enjoy the sport, achieve their goals, and progress in line with their long-term development.