



Age Group Masters Competitions

Frequently Asked Questions

ELIGIBILITY

What age do you have to be to take part in England Age Group Masters competition?

You must be 35 years or above at the time of your qualifying race.

Age groups go up in five-year bands starting with V35-39, V40-44, V45-49 and so on.

There is no upper limit to getting involved and recent England teams have had octogenarians taking part.

I'll be 35 at the time of the representative match, but 34 on the day of the qualifier.

Can I be considered for qualification?

No, you must be 35 years or above at the time of your qualifying race.

I am a member of an affiliated club, does that make me eligible?

Yes, as long as your England Athletics 'athlete registration' is up-to-date.

Please note that payment of your club membership fee does not necessarily mean you are registered with England Athletics depending on your club's membership policy. Some clubs register all of their members for competition and build the athlete registration fee into their annual club membership, but many clubs have 'social' membership for non-competitive club runners. It is your responsibility to check your athlete registration status.

I am a member of an unaffiliated club or Run Together group, am I eligible?

No, the masters opportunities are a unique benefit to registered athletes of affiliated clubs, who pay an annual membership to compete as registered athletes in affiliated clubs only.

However, if you choose to affiliate to a club then you will become eligible.

What is 'athlete registration'?

Athlete registration means you are a member of an England Athletics affiliated club and registered for competition in accordance with the UKA rules for competition. You will be issued with a Unique Reference Number as a registered athlete and your athlete registration needs to be renewed annually.

Athlete registration also enables you to access a range of membership benefits.

Please go to the link below for further information:

<https://www.englandathletics.org//athletes/athlete-registration/athlete-registration>

Do I need to be a member of a specialist Masters club to compete in the England qualifying events or representative teams?

No. Unlike some other masters competitions you are not required to affiliate to a masters club. As long as you are affiliated to an England club and have a current athlete registration you are eligible to take part.

I am English, but compete first claim for a Scottish or Welsh club, am I eligible to qualify for the England Age Group Masters team?

The England Age Group Masters programme is a unique competition benefit to registered athletes in English affiliated clubs, therefore 'yes', as long as you are also registered to a second claim English club.

I am Scottish/Welsh/Irish, but I live in England and compete for an English club, am I eligible to qualify for the England team?

Yes, as long as you are registered first claim to an English club. However, please note that in doing so this will make you ineligible to compete for your nation of birth in the same year.

Please see the UK competition rule 21, p45 at <https://www.uka.org.uk/competitions/rules/>

REGISTRATION

I didn't hear about this opportunity until after the qualifying race, can I register post-race?

No. You must register your intent to be considered prior to the qualifying race. Information regarding competition opportunities are given on our website and promoted in advance and are accessible to all visitors to the site and all members who are signed up to our e-bulletins. If you are a registered athlete with England Athletics you can update your mailing preferences to ensure you do not miss out by going to: <https://myathletics.englandathletics.org/portal/Members/Login>

Can I register interest in more than one qualifying race?

Yes, you can enter as many of the listed qualifying races as you wish. If for example you plan to run a specific qualifying race, but do not get selected through that race, you can then choose to do another qualifying race, but you must register your interest for each qualifying race you plan to run.

I have registered my interest with England Athletics, does this now mean I am entered in the qualifying race?

No, you must enter the race separately.

How do I know if my interest has been registered with England Athletics?

On registering interest, you will receive an automatic confirmation email. Your details will be logged with us and if successful in qualification we will contact you using the email address you provide on registration. Errors in submitting an incorrect email address may result in you missing out on a selection invitation. Please retain your confirmation email as proof of registration.

What if my registration wasn't received?

The registration link is robust. If you retained your confirmation email personal then you can provide proof of registration, however unfortunately if you did not save this and a problem were to arise then we have no means of validating your registration.

What about registration of interest at the point of race entry?

Some of our qualifying races allow you to tick a box on their race entry form which allows you to register interest for the qualifying race directly through them. They then share this data with us, so we receive notification of your registration.

However, we are trying to phase this out so that there is one point of registration only to minimize confusion and as such we'd encourage you to register at the England Athletics website to be doubly certain you have registered interest.

QUALIFICATION & MINIMUM STANDARDS

I qualified in one age group, but by the time of the representative race I will be in another category. What does this mean for qualification?

You must compete in the correct age category at the time of the given race.

For example, you might run the qualifying race as a 54 year-old and qualify as a V50, but by the time of the representative race you have turned 55, meaning you will compete as a V55 in your England vest.

In simple terms you cannot qualify in an older age group for which you have not yet reached.

I finished within the top few places eligible for selection, but my time was slower than the advertised minimum standard, have I qualified?

You must have both a qualifying position and a minimum standard to secure selection, but the times do not have to be achieved on the day of the qualifying race.

If you have a minimum qualifying standard achieved within 12 months prior to the qualifying event, in addition to your qualifying position, then you will be eligible for selection.

Times must be achieved in a UKA licensed races that appear on the www.runbritain.com or www.powerof10.info results and ranking websites. We cannot accept performances not listed on either site.

Please note that England Athletics reserves the right not to accept times achieved on courses that have been measured short. These races are indicated on the ranking websites.

I didn't run in any of the qualifying races, but I have a time or ranking that is better than other runners who have been selected for the team. Can I be considered for the team?

No, selection can only be achieved through taking part in a qualifying race. The qualifying races are a key part of the Masters programme and are the only route to selection.

Are the minimum standards based on gun or chip time?

For minimum standards achieved in non-qualifying races we will accept chip timed results.

Whilst in the past for the purposes of the qualifying races, gun times took precedence in determining finishing positions this has now changed.

*****With waved starts likely at qualifying races due to COVID finishing position will now be based on chip times.*****

How are the minimum standards decided?

The minimum standards are intended to be both aspirational but achievable by a good number of age group club runners. They have been determined using a combination of runbritain ranking data and the WAVA age graded performances in the upper regional to national ranges.

We regularly review the standards and adjust these, year on year.

I finished just outside the qualification places in my qualifier races, but I know that one of the qualifiers in the age group above will have moved up an age group by the time of the representative race, which opens up a qualification place. Can I be considered?

No, you must finish in the qualifying position on the day regardless. Many runners will move up an age group by the time of the representative race and as such we do not aim to back fill places.

My chip time is faster than another runner in my age group who has been selected ahead of me from the same qualifying race, why have I not been selected?

Positions at the qualifying races are decided on gun times, with position being the primary criteria for qualification.

SELECTION DECISIONS

How is the team selected?

Selection is ultimately determined by

- (i) eligibility
- (ii) qualification by position in an advertised qualifying race
- (iii) achievement of a minimum standard either in the qualifier or 12 months prior

England Athletics reserve the right to de-select athletes who have met (ii) and (iii), but subsequently are found to be ineligible due to club affiliation or lacking athlete registration for example.

Whilst there is no reserve system England Athletics reserve the right to add places to the team if they see fit. Additions may be made in line with the above criteria and in the case of extenuating circumstances or where the standards may have been set to high meaning that there are vacancies on the team.

When will I be notified of my selection?

England Athletics aims to notify all qualifiers by email as soon as possible and within 14 days of the qualifying race.

However, please be aware that we are a very small team working on this programme and at busy times this may take up to 21 days and individual enquiries may not be answered until all checks have been run and the team is ready to announce.

Due to the large volume of runners registering interest we cannot guarantee you will hear from us if you are not selected. Therefore, please assume that if you have not heard from us within 21 days of the qualifying race taking place then you have not been successful.

Appeals

Given the friendly nature of qualification and selection for the England Masters teams, and the volume of runners involved, we do not operate a formal appeals process on selection decisions.

If having read the FAQs document you still have an unanswered question regarding a selection decision then you should email agegroupteam@englandathletics.org with your proof of registration and your query.

Please note that we will only deal directly with the person for whom the query is about and therefore please do not send in queries on behalf of or regarding other athletes.

ENGLAND AGE GROUP MASTERS REPRESENTATION

What does it mean if I qualify for an England Age Group Team?

Depending on the number of automatic places offered for a particular team you will join an England team of between 100 to 200 fellow age group runners from across the country. Around 9-15 of these runners will be in your same gender age group category on the day.

What will it cost me?

With over 450 age group representatives qualifying for different events each year all team members will be expected to cover the cost of the own entry fee, travel costs and where required accommodation. England kit will also be available to purchase through our kit partner Kukri.

Race Entry Costs

Entry costs to qualifying races and representative races will vary and are the decision of the event provider. Entry fees may vary depending on what time of year you qualify, with many races offering early bird discounts.

Elite Starts

England Athletics work with all of our event providers to ensure that the England team and opposition teams have access to special starting pen ahead of the masses. This is usually immediately behind the elite start. England Masters who qualify for an elite start entry by right are entitled to take up that place with the event organizer.

What if I get ill or injured and am unable to take up my place on the England Age group Team? Can I defer my place for a future team?

Unfortunately, the nature of competition and sport does mean that from time to time some runners will sadly not be able to take up their place on the team for which they qualified. We do not defer team places and unfortunately if you do miss out you will need to look to re-qualify for a future event. This is no different than the athlete who qualifies for the Olympics and has to withdraw due.

AGE GROUP MASTERS ENGLAND KIT

How do I purchase my England kit?

Kit is made available for purchase for all England Masters representatives through our kit partner Kukri. Following confirmation of your selection you will be sent a link and password to place your order. This is only available to England Masters qualifiers and should not be shared.

The kit shop will be open for designated periods in the year and leading up to the representative event and these details will be communicated to you via email in the team up-dates.

What kit is available to purchase?

A wide range of kit is available from racing vests and shorts to tracksuits and hoodies and t-shirts.

How is the kit different to the England International kit?

The England Age Group Masters kit has been specially designed for the England Masters runners and is different in design from the kit our elite senior international teams wear. The items selected in the kit range have also been selected with road running and masters runners in mind.

Do I have to purchase kit if I am selected?

You do not have to purchase kit if you are selected to represent the England Masters team, although of course we hope you will be proud to do so.

If you do not wish to wear the England vest to compete, then we ask that you wear your first claim affiliated club vest instead, or if you have an England vest from a previous representative team then you may wear that instead.

I did not qualify, but can I purchase kit?

No, the purchasing of kit is only available to age group masters earning selection to an England Age Group Masters team.

When will I receive my kit?

Your kit will be dispatched to you by Kukri, who will advise on delivery at the time of your order.

I received my kit and it is the wrong size, can I return it?

Yes, returns and refunds can be made through Kukri. Please direct all kit queries to Kukri.

Can I choose to race in kit that is not Kukri?

Yes, there is no obligation to purchase kit. If you have England Masters kit from previous competitions and wish to wear that you may do so. You may also wear your own shorts with your England vest if you prefer. However, if not wearing England kit, then you should race in your affiliated English club vest.

OPPOSITION TEAMS

Who will I compete against if I qualify?

Opposition teams will vary. In most instances it is likely to be a Celtic Nations team. Size and depth of the opposition teams will vary, and match scoring systems will aim to reflect that.

I am a registered member of an affiliated English club, but have Celtic Nation eligibility, can I compete for the Celtic Team?

Yes, if you meet eligibility requirements.

Please see the UK competition rule 21, p45 at <https://www.uka.org.uk/competitions/rules/>

However, please note that you cannot compete for both England and the Celtic team within a 12 month time period should you wish to try and qualify for the England team.

QUALIFYING RACES

Why is London not included in the qualifying races for the marathon?

Whilst England Athletics acknowledges the enduring popularity of London Marathon around the world and recognize that many club runners target London as their primary marathon each year, entries to London are restricted meaning that many club runners do not get a place each year.

England Athletics remain committed to working with a wide range of event providers providing accessible opportunity for club runners of all abilities.

Why does the number of qualifying places vary from 10k to marathon?

Team sizes will vary for a number of reasons. Some of this is do with event capacity and elite start lines, number of qualifying races, opposition teams, etc.

The qualifying race I intended to do is full, can England Athletics get me a race entry?

No, England Athletics do not hold reserve entries with the event organisers. We aim to promote the masters qualifying races at the earliest opportunity and where possible from the point at which the race entries officially open. We would encourage all interested runners to ensure they check out the England Athletics website and e-bulletins on a regular basis to avoid disappointment.

The standard at the qualifying race I opted to do was higher than the others and I whilst I missed out on an automatic qualifying spot at my chosen qualifying race, my time would have placed me as a qualifier in the other race, therefore can I be considered for the selection?

No, qualification must be by placing in the relevant qualifying race and not time.

We do take into consideration size of event, course profile, time and past results when selecting our qualifying races and aim to get some parity, but no course or race is the same and race day conditions will inevitably vary. We also aim for a North, Midlands and South region qualifying option and therefore the standards at qualifying races will vary.

Many of the participating masters who took part in the qualifiers have reported how much they valued the high-quality qualifying races in their age bands regardless of whether they made the team or not.

Will the qualifying races be the same each year?

No, not necessarily. We try to strike a balance between working with known race providers who have provided excellent qualifying opportunities in the past, whilst at the same time taking qualifying opportunities to different parts of the country and working with new race providers.

What happens if a qualifying race is cancelled due to extreme weather?

In the rare instances where a qualifying race might be cancelled due to extreme weather conditions, as was the case in the winter of 2018, then England Athletics will look to select qualifiers in either one of the following ways:

- (i) If the event is rescheduled within a time frame that makes qualification and selection for the linked representative opportunity possible, then we will select from the revised competition date and field on that day.
- (ii) If the event is not rescheduled within an appropriate time frame, then we will select from the UK runbritain rankings from the previous 12 months prior (from the time that the race would have taken place) from the runners who registered interest for that specific qualifying race.

In the event of qualification by (ii) only results in UKA licensed races (that are not short in distance) and from the previous 12 months and on the road (not multi-terrain) will be considered. Athletes must have logged a minimum standard in the age group they would have challenged for as a qualifier, which for some runners changing up an age group may mean is less than a 12 month time frame.

How do I get involved if there isn't a qualifying race near to me?

England Athletics aims to ensure there are fair qualifying opportunities North, Midlands and South of England. Qualifying competition is largely area based, but England Athletics work with a wide range of event providers and are committed to creating opportunities across the country and rotating qualifying and representative races to different parts of the country and different race providers. As is often the case with Area competition runners interested in getting involved may have to be prepared to travel.

To date we have staged or scheduled masters qualifying opportunities in Chester, Brighton, Manchester, Bournemouth, York, Hull, Chichester, Lincoln, Fleet, Plymouth and Telford, with representative races at Birmingham, Chester, Maidenhead & York.

CELTIC OPPOSITION TEAMS

Which Nations are included in the Celtic combined team?

- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland
- Ireland
- Isle of Man

I am, or I know of a runner who is interested in competing for the Celtic Team. What do I need to do?

Unlike the England team there are no advertised qualifying races.

Currently these teams are pulled together based on an expression of interest basis from eligible runners. This may change in the future should the respective Home nations bodies wish to coordinate their own teams. In the meantime, individual runners simply need to submit an expression of interest by email to: agegroupteam@englandathletics.org

What standard do I need to be?

As there are no qualification races, we do not restrict Celtic runners to the England standards, however we do recommend that interested runners use the standards given as a guideline to the level of competition. England Athletics reserves the right to turn down expressions of interest from runners who may be deemed to be a significantly slower standard than those runners who will be competing on the day.

Where can I find the standards?

The standards can be found under the respective race distance pages at the link below.

<https://www.englandathletics.org/athletics-and-running/england-competitions/england-teams-and-selection/england-age-group-masters/>

What vest should I wear for the competition and where can I get these?

Runners from the invited Celtic Nations who have previously earned a representative vest are encouraged to wear their Home Nations colours.

For many of these runners, the vests will have been earned through membership and selection and representation at Welsh Masters or Scottish Veteran Harriers clubs or similar bodies.

For runners who do not have a vest through these means, then we ask that you wear your first claim club vest to compete in.

Expressions of Interest

Expressions of interest will then be confirmed as accepted or pending subject to the information provided. Interested runners should provide the following information on emailing:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Athlete Registration Number
- First claim affiliated club
- Link to your individual Power of 10 where applicable. <https://www.thepowerof10.info>
- Masters club if applicable (as with the England team, this is not essential)
- Race - which you wish to be considered for
- Where you do not have P10 profile, please provide details on current performances

OTHER MASTERS COMPETITIONS

England Athletics works closely with the British Masters Athletics Federation in promoting the England Age Group opportunities. These representative opportunities aim to add value to existing masters competition and to widen opportunities to masters runners from across the England Athletics membership.

The key difference between the England Athletics programme and that of BMAF and EMAA (England Masters Athletics Association) events are that:

- (i) the England Athletics programme focusses solely on road running competition as part of our wider organizational work in supporting off track clubs and membership

- (ii) runners are not required to be affiliated to a masters specific club in order to take part, as long as they are a registered athlete with an affiliated England Athletics club

British Masters Athletics Federation promote a wide range of opportunities that cover all disciplines, including their own BMAF Road Running Championships. Some of these Championship events take place within the same race as the England Masters representative events, particularly at the longer distances such as the marathon, where it makes good sense to do, given many of the runners involved will be both part of the England Masters team and also looking to contest the BMAF Championships at the same time.

Further details on BMAF and EMAA events can be found on their respective websites:

<http://bmaf.org.uk>

<http://englandmasters.org.uk>