

Useful swimming knowledge

Term	Definition
Long course	A competition held where the pool length is 50m
Short course	A competition held where the pool length is 25m
Open Meet	A competition open to any swimmer from any club who meets the criteria for entry.
Masters	Swimmers over the age of 18 are eligible to compete as masters swimmers (but do not have to and can continue to compete in main stream swimming). Masters swimming operates different competition rules and a different swim season.
Licensed meets	<p>British Swimming use a Licensing method to grade the competitive ability of the meet, 4 being the lowest and 1 being the highest. The license also dictates certain criteria such as qualifications and officials, pool format, and entry time criteria.</p> <p>There are 4 levels for licensed open meets: Level 1, 2, 3 and 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Level 1: A long course meet and of a very highest standard. ○ Level 2: The highest level short course meet aimed at National-Regional and County standard swimmers. ○ Level 3: Mainly aimed at County and Regional level swimmers and below. ○ Level 4: Aimed at junior or less experienced swimmers looking to build upon their foundation skills.
Competition Age	Every competition has an “age at date” which can be either the date of the competition or 31st December of the competition year. A swimmer cannot enter an open meet until they reach the age of 9, and some competitions have other minimum age requirements for specific events. Swimmers can compete in club championships and some mini-meets before this age.
Entry time	The time submitted by the club for a swimmer being entered in an Open Meet. If entries are made well in advance, the entry time may not be the swimmers current PB.
County qualifying times (CQT)	County qualifying times can be achieved in any meet licensed at level 4 or higher.
Regional qualifying times (RQT)	Regional qualifying times can only be achieved in a meet licensed at Level 3 or higher.

National qualifying times (NQT)	National qualifying times can only be achieved in Level 1 or 2 meets of the relevant length.
Consideration or qualification time	The slowest entry time for a particular event that the organisers of a gala will consider.
LQT - Lower Qualification Time	The slowest entry time for a particular event that the organisers of a gala will consider.
QT – Upper Qualification Time	The fastest time that can be submitted to enter an open meet that a promoter will consider. Many swimmers become eligible for these meets as they progress through the club (Level 4) but some Level 3 meets have both Lower and Higher entry times to control numbers and the standard at which the promoter is targeting for a particular event.
PB – personal best	A swimmer’s personal best time for a given event.
DQ (disqualification) DQ'd and disq	Abbreviation for disqualified on result sheets and time cards (there are many different codes that explain a reason for being disqualified). Competition referees apply the rules of swimming and a swimmer can be disqualified. Generally there is a code listed to show what the disqualification relates to.
Heat Declared Winner (HDW)	When no final is swum and the winner is declared on the times swum in the heats.
Qualification window	All National Times must be achieved within this window. No times outside the window will be considered.
I.M. – individual medley	The competitor swims all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle.
Medley relay	Four swimmers each swim a different stroke. The order is always backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle
Squadron relay	Usually the last race of a gala. A freestyle relay consisting of one swimmer from each age group or one swimmer of each sex from each age group.
Form stroke	One of the three strokes having specific requirements (i.e. 200M, Breaststroke, Butterfly or Backstroke). Freestyle is not a Form Stroke but is used for distance events, such as 200/400/800 or 1500m depending on the swimmers age and sex.

Swim England (ASA) Membership	A swimmer must be registered Category 2 to take part in an Open Meet. Category 1 is only suitable for those swimmers under the age of 9 or for non-competitive Masters. You can check your swimmers membership details at: www.swimmingresults.org/membershipcheck
Withdrawals	Once you have been entered and accepted into the gala if there are any events you are unable to compete in (Eg due to illness) you must speak to your coach as they will need to withdraw you from the event. If you do not withdraw correctly you could be fined and/or not allowed to compete in any further events during that session.
Signing in	Some Level 3 and 4 competitions operate a sign in procedure. The swimmer must sign in for each race they have entered by a specified time (often no later than warm up start time). If you do not sign in, you will not be allowed to compete in that event on the day.
Heat-seeding	Galas are run on a basis where swimmers of similar time ability compete against each other in a heat. Hence it is normally the case that later heats will be the faster heats. Results are listed by age groups so winning a heat doesn't necessarily mean winning a medal. Occasionally the meet will run in reverse order so faster swimmers swim first.