

# SESW Officials Handbook Summer 2026 - Hengrove



## Introduction

Swim England Southwest is delighted to welcome you to the Summer Championships 2026. Thank you in advance for giving up your time to make these Championships a success. Without volunteers it would not be possible to run them. We hope you have a safe and enjoyable experience.

In this handbook you should find the information that you will need. Whether this is your first event or you have helped before, there is important information so please take time to read through before you arrive for your session(s) and ask the team if you have any questions. If you have any questions or need help with anything, please approach the Technical Director (TD) or their assistant (ATD).

There are 5 sections:

1. About the Competition
2. Officiating – general information
3. Officiating – role specific information
4. Parade Order
5. Use of Radios

**Thank you for taking the time to read the document.**

# 1. About the Competition

## Dates and Times

The Youth and Para championships will be held on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> May at Hengrove Park Leisure Centre, Bristol, BS14 0DE:

			Officials Report time	Session Start time	Estimated Finish time
Saturday	2 <sup>nd</sup> May	Session 7 Heats	8.15am (briefing 8.35am)	9.00am	10.46am
		Session 8 Heats	11.15am (briefing 11.30am)	11.55am	1.55pm
		Session 9 Finals	2.00pm (briefing 2.15pm)	2.40pm	3.55pm
Sunday	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	Session 10 Heats	8.15am (briefing 8.35am)	9.00am	11.55am
		Session 11 Heats	11.15am (briefing 11.30am)	11.53am	2.16pm
		Session 12 Finals	2.30pm (briefing 2.45pm)	3.10pm	4.29pm
Monday	4 <sup>th</sup> May	Session 13 Heats	8.15am (briefing 8.35am)	9.00am	10.57pm
		Session 14 Heats	11.15am (briefing 11.30am)	11.55am	2.04pm
		Session 15 Finals	2.10pm (briefing 2.25pm)	2.50pm	4.06pm

## Technical Directors

The Technical Director and Assistant TD are:

TD	Contact:	ATD	Contact:
Tracey Roberts	07917190498	Chris Metcalfe	somersetasa.officials@gmail.com

## Uniform, Changing and Equipment

The dress code for these championships is black trousers or black knee length skirt, knee length shorts or ¾ length trousers are also acceptable. If you have not yet purchased black you may continue to wear a white equivalent. Black or white shoes with soles suitable for poolside use are acceptable – flip flops or opened toed shoes are discouraged as they present risks to H & S however footwear remains a personal choice although bare feet are not allowed.

Polo Shirts should be white and with the Regional Logo. If you already have a SESWR polo please wear it. If you have ordered your first polo shirt or a replacement when signing up, please speak to the Assistant Technical Director on arrival. Shirts must be pre-ordered at least one week ahead of the event on Swim-Meet.

If you have any conditions that prevent you from fulfilling specific duties, please indicate this on swim meet so the allocation of duties can reflect this. You may also talk to the TD or ATD in confidence.

**Please remember to reconfirm all your session availabilities when you amend or check anything on Swim Meet otherwise all your information disappears with the assumption you are no longer attending the meet.**

<https://www.swim-meet.com/OfficialsSignup/SwimEnglandSouthWest/>

Officials can use the adult changing rooms; these are located on the ground level on the left past the reception and stairs. Lockers are available in the changing rooms.

Belongings can be left in the official's area but are left at your own risk.

Please bring the following equipment with you to the event:

- Clipboard and pens
- Aquatics GB/British Swimming Licence Card on lanyard
- Stopwatch (2 if possible, allowing for CTK duties)
- Whistle

## Parking

There is a multi-storey car park opposite the entrance to the pool. It is on your left as you approach the pool, from the mini roundabout. The car registration details that you entered into swim meet on sign up will be passed to reception. On arrival the Technical Director will have a list of those who have registered so please check that you are on the list.

## Reporting on arrival, refreshments and briefings

On arrival, once changed, please report to the officials' area which is usually up the stairs and round to the left (otherwise it might be in the creche adjacent to reception on the ground floor).

Please tick your name on the "provisional" duty list. If your role is marked to need a **radio**, please collect it straight away from the ATD who will show you how to use it. Please also ask the ATD for your shirt if you have pre-ordered this.

## Breaks and refreshments

On arrival tea, coffee, water, squash and biscuits will be provided.

Please bring with you your own refillable water bottle for poolside and a reusable cup/mug as there will be limited cups available.

Between sessions there will be a break. Refreshments will be provided in the officials' area.

The main lunch will be available between the first and second session of each day. Drinks and biscuits will be available between the second and third session of each day.

You will be advised during the briefing where you can obtain water to replenish during the sessions.

If you have any dietary requirements these **MUST** be ordered in advance on the Swim Meet sign up. Your food will be clearly marked.

The Technical Briefings will take place in the official's area approximately 20 minutes before the designated session start time. Duties for the session will be confirmed during the technical briefing, and all necessary paperwork will be handed out.

### **NOTE: World Aquatics Rule Update 2026**

This meet will follow the updated rules which were adopted by Swim England on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026, for all English level 1 meets and this includes the Regional Championships. All other levels of meet will adopt the changes in England on May 11<sup>th</sup>. The changes that effect on deck officiating will be explained in the Briefing.

Because of the changes there has been some renumbering of the rules, so a new sheet outlining the numbers and the relevant competition regulation will be available at the Referee's table to use with the existing report form.

## **Trainees**

**Trainees are welcome to attend. However, as a level one meet all officials must be qualified and licensed for the role they are allocated.**

J1 trainees therefore will be partnered with a qualified official for mentoring. Please make sure that you bring your logbook and take it with you to poolside.

J2 trainees will be offered one or more mentored sessions whenever sufficient officials are present. However, it may be necessary for you to fulfil a J1 duty.

If you have any questions, please contact the TD for the sessions that you have signed up for.

## **Mobile Phones**

SE policy prohibits the use of mobile phones in changing rooms. Ideally, they should not be brought poolside either. If you need to have your phone with you for legitimate reasons, please ensure that they are on silent on poolside. Should you need to make or receive an urgent call please ask to be substituted so you may leave poolside.

## **Expenses forms**

These will be available in the officials' area and should be completed and returned to the folder provided or handed to the TD no later than the "Reporting in for YOUR LAST SESSION of the weekend". Receipts must be provided and a stapler will be available to secure these to your form. Please complete both sides of the claim form and you will need your bank details to do this. The expenses policy can be found at [sesw-expenses-policy-revised-doc-march-26.docx](#)

## 2. Officiating – general information

The next two sections do not give technical information or interpretation but outline the general guidance and protocols for officiating.

### Reporting

Remember, when in doubt the Athlete always gets the benefit.

When an official is certain they have observed an infraction within their role this should be reported to the Race Referee as soon as possible without discussing anything with anyone other than the Race Referee. The official needs to be sure of what they have seen and suspect it is an infraction - the latter will be confirmed in discussion with the referee.

Trainees should accompany their Mentor when the Mentor has a report to make. The Mentor must make the report and complete the paperwork. The trainee may complete an unofficial dummy report which they can keep.

How to indicate there is a potential infraction to report is outlined for each role in the next section. Please do not wait until the end of a race to make a report.

If after outlining the potential infraction to the Race Referee you are invited to write a disqualification report, please wait until the Referee has checked the report before returning to your duty. Your role will be covered whilst making the report.

### Paperwork

You will be issued with heat sheets according to your role. Please return sheets to the Referee's table at the end of each session and make sure that it has your name & lane/duty on it, in case there are any queries subsequently. If a CTK has been appointed, they will collect each lane timekeeper/IOT sheet.

### Impartiality and communication

Please remember that we should be impartial, so please don't cheer Athletes (swimmers) from your club. Out of respect for the Athletes limit conversations with them to checking names and to responding to their questions. If there are any queries about results or the competition, refer these to the referees. Don't share your manual times with Athletes because these are not the official times. In particular please don't communicate about possible infractions or offer advice or your interpretation of decisions with anyone at any time. **All questions should always be politely directed to the TD or, if known, the Race Referee.**

### Para Swimming

Para athletes are judged in accordance with 2026 World Aquatics / World Para Swimming Rules, with specific Para rule exceptions to ensure fair competition for all.

The sports class of the athlete competing should be displayed on your programme; the referees will hold the list detailing the exceptions. It is therefore important all rule infractions are reported directly to the race referee. WPS disqualification forms will be available at the referee's table, assistance will be given if you are not familiar with the form.

### Additional information when para-athletes are in the race

#### Stroke Judges

Stroke judges are required to walk for all distances.

At the end of the race please observe the athlete exiting the pool.

Upon exiting the pool the blacken goggles of S11 athletes are required to be checked and confirmation that they comply with the rules should be communicated to the referee.

### **Chief Inspector of Turns**

For 50M races the CIOT can assist the Stroke Judge by observing the athlete exiting the pool.

### **Starters**

Ensure you note in your programme of any start exceptions and requests for the secondary strobes. Please be aware that Para athletes may need additional time to adopt their starting position.

The command Relax should be given if you need to stop the start sequence.

## **3. Officiating – role specific information**

Please read through information that is relevant to the roles that you may be undertaking.

### **a. Timekeepers/IOT at the start end**

Please check that you have the correct Athlete in your lane for your race. Please tell the chief timekeeper if there is an anomaly. If you do not have an Athlete mark your programme with NS (no Athlete/Swimmer) or DNS (Did not swim)

Start of the race (other than backstroke):

- If you have an Athlete in your lane stand on the Referee's short whistles
- On the long whistle blast move towards the raised platform/plinth.
- Immediately after the start signal has been given, please move on to the plinth to the side of the starting blocks to observe that the competitor in your lane complies with the rules of the underwater phase after the Start.
- If satisfied that you have not observed any infraction, immediately return to your chair and sit down.
- If an infraction has been observed remain standing and look towards the Chief Inspector of Turns. As soon as they or a reserve official arrive to replace you, make your way to the Referee of that race. Please do not wait until the end of the race.

Turns and Finish:

- As the Athlete in your lane reaches 15m from the turn/finish, move to the edge of the pool to observe the turn or finish, sitting down when your duties are complete.
- If an infraction is observed remain standing and look towards the Chief Inspector of Turns.

Distance events (400m, 800m and 1500m freestyle):

- You will be required to use the provided lap counters and a bell, or your own whistle.

- Please ensure you ask the Athlete which side they would prefer the lap counters to be presented,
- At the beginning of the race ensure your lap counters are set correctly (these should show the entire distance at the start).
- Immediately after the start and each turn adjust the numbers down ready for the next turn. Place the lap cards by your chair so the referee can see the remaining number of lengths is displayed ready for the next turn.
- Stand up and move to the pool edge when the Athlete passes 15m from the turn ready to display the cards when the Athlete is 5m from the turn and keep the cards on display for 5m past the turn so allowing the Athlete sufficient time to look back after each turn.
- Sit back down and mark off the counting sheet provided.
- Indicate to the Athlete by ringing the bells for 5 metres in and 5 metres out of the final turn when they have two lengths remaining. After the last turn make sure the cards are no longer visible and as soon as the race has finished reset them ready for the next heat.
- When presenting the cards for the incoming Athlete please hold them just above the timing pad at the water's edge on your lane; do not rest them on the bulkhead or lower them into the water.

#### Backstroke:

- Start ledges will be in use. However, Athletes do not have to use them.
- If an official would like a demonstration or refresher on the use of the ledges, please ask the ATD on arrival. They will be pleased to arrange this before the competition commences.
- When the event prior to backstroke has been completed, and whilst the Athletes in that event are leaving the pool, install the ledge at the '0' setting before returning to your seat
- Do not push the back-plate against the backstroke ledge.
- Should Athletes wish to use a setting other than '0', they must make the adjustment themselves, although you may advise them if they are struggling with this.
- On the Referees short whistles, stand and on the first long whistle blast, move towards the plinth.
- On the second long blast, step up onto the plinth (only required if the Athlete in your lane is using the backstroke ledge) and observe that at least one toe of each of the Athlete's feet is in contact with the timing pad. The Athlete does not have to use the ledge for both feet but a toe from each foot must be in contact with the timing pad.
- If the toes are correctly positioned, please step backwards and off the bulkhead onto the pool deck. If they are not, instruct and observe the Athlete whilst they move their toes as necessary before carefully moving back off the bulkhead. This will indicate to the referee that the Athlete in your lane has complied with the rule requirements.
- After you have observed the underwater phase after the start of the race, ensure that the ledge is set to the '0' position before lifting and removing the ledge out completely and placing it behind the block.
- The Referee will be looking for Officials still standing at the edge of the pool as an indication of an infraction report. If you have a rule infraction to report, remain standing near the starting platform and await the Chief Inspector of Turns.
- At the end of a heat please install the ledge ready for the next heat before writing down your time so that the next heat can be started promptly.

## **b. Inspectors of turn at turn end**

- If you are assigned two lanes, please stand between them to observe turns and continue to do this even if you only have one Athlete in your lanes.
- As the Athlete in your lane reaches 15m from the turn/finish, move to the edge of the pool to observe the turn stepping back/sitting down when your duties are complete.
- If an infraction is observed remain standing at the pool edge and look towards the Chief Inspector of Turns.
- For the 50m events, please check the names of the Athletes and observe the underwater phase after the start of the race (see section 3a). In 50m backstroke races please operate the ledge setting it to zero after each start; the ledge does not need to be removed until the event has concluded. Please check that one toe of each foot is in contact with the timing pad after the second long whistle (see section on Backstroke above).

## **c. Chief inspector of turns**

- Please stand when the first Inspector of Turns stands at the Start, Turn or Finish of a race, returning to your seat when all Inspectors have stepped back or sat down.
- Observe the Inspectors of Turns and if one remains standing at the pool edge, please radio the Referee immediately that a report is coming and from which lane (not the detail of the infraction) and, either ask a reserve official, or take their place yourself. Direct the Inspector of Turns to report to the Referee.
- If positioned at the finish end of the pool, please take a stopwatch with you on to the deck and start it for each race in case you are required to replace an IOT/TK, remembering to reset the watch between races.
- If asked to act as Chief Timekeeper as well as CIT, please also follow the protocols for that role.

## **d. Chief Timekeeper (if appointed)**

- Please take two stopwatches with you on deck and record the times of the first and last Athletes in the race.
- Throughout each race monitor all Timekeepers, reacting as necessary in the case of watch failure.
- In the event of a watch failure, you should arrange for a substitute watch. This may be provided by a reserve official. The timekeeper should still operate the backup button themselves. **In the unlikely event that all spare watches are in use you should arrange for one of the other timekeepers to take a split time for first of two lanes to finish and to stop their watch when the second Athlete finishes.**
- Respond to requests (by Radio if issued) from the Referee or AOE Referee for manual times.

## **e. Finish Judge (if appointed)**

- Move into a position to record the finish when the leading Athlete in the race reaches 15m from the Finish.
- Record your finish order as observed and be prepared to share that with the Referee if asked.
- If you are positioned on the opposite side to the Referees the report will be by radio, but only when asked.

## **f. Stroke Judge**

- Where there are 2 stroke judges each side, at the start of a race, judges of stroke should take up position on the Referee's short whistles at 7m and 15m from the start on each side of the pool for Freestyle, Backstroke and Butterfly. The Stroke judge named first on the duties list takes up the position nearest the start.
- In Breaststroke events the positions at the start of each race are at 5m and 7m.
- Where there is only one stroke judge each side of the pool, take up a start position at the 15m mark for Freestyle, Backstroke, Butterfly and Medley races, and at the 7m mark for Breaststroke.
- In Freestyle events of 100m or more, once the race has begun, please stand at the 15m mark(s) and observe the Athletes from those locations. (If there is only one stroke judge on each side, they should be positioned 15m from the start end). When there are two stroke judges on each side one stands at 15m from the start and the other 15m from the turn end.
- Otherwise, your position along the poolside will be influenced by the distribution of the Athletes across the total width and length of the pool, concentrating on the half of the pool closest to you. Please be alert to any scenario where there is no official acting as stroke judge on the opposite side and watch the whole pool.
- The Judges of Stroke on the side opposite the Referee will be equipped with a radio to provide rapid communication with the Referee.
- Should you observe an infraction, inform the Referee as soon as possible either by word of mouth or radio. Do not wait until the end of the race.
- The remaining Judge (if there are two each side) will then take responsibility for the length of the pool. If there is only one Judge per side and there is a J2 qualified Reserve Official or Finish judge, please ask them to cover whilst making the report.
- On arriving on the pool deck after the parade please check that the backstroke turn indicator flags are correctly positioned at 5m from each end of the pool.

## **g. Starter**

- There will be one appointed starter each session.
- The Starter should go onto poolside during the warmup, before the briefing and
  - satisfy themselves that the starting blocks are stable, nothing is broken and that backboards are working correctly; and secure any loose cables.
  - Speak with the AOE operator and do a test start before returning to the briefing.
  - Also check any starting device for the 50m events, please test this before the 50m event starts.
- It is likely that some Athletes will request to use the secondary strobe. The Referees and Starter should be informed of this before the session. The strobe can be positioned between the 2 central lanes during the poolside checking phase, checked it is working and then moved as required.

## 4. Parading on

At least 5 minutes before the session start time, officials should gather in the walkthrough shower area or the training pool to parade on. Trainees will parade with their mentor. There will be two lines of Officials who should track each other down along both sides of the pool.

All Referees and the Starter should parade and join the Technical Director in the middle of the start end and stand in front of the timekeepers to be introduced.

When walking on to Poolside please do not carry anything other than agreed items: clipboard, water bottle etc.

The orders are shown below:

Balcony Side (Gather in walk through shower area)	Opposite Balcony (Gather far side, just through the door into the training pool area)
Race Referee(s)	Technical Director
Timekeeper/IOT Lane 4	AOE Referee
Timekeeper/IOT Lane 3	Starter
Timekeeper/IOT Lane 2	Timekeeper/IOT Lane 5
Timekeeper/IOT Lane 1	Timekeeper/IOT Lane 6
Timekeeper/IOT Lane 0	Timekeeper/IOT Lane 7
Chief Timekeeper (s)	Timekeeper/IOT Lane 8
Finish Judge Ref Side	Timekeeper/IOT Lane 9

Stroke Judges Ref Side	Chief Inspector of Turns Start End
<u>To go Straight along Turn End</u>	Finish Judge Far Side
<i>If covering two lanes stand between the lanes</i>	Stroke Judge(s) Far Side
Inspector of Turns – Lane 4	<u>To go straight along Turn End</u>
Inspector of Turns – Lane 3	<i>If covering two lanes stand between the lanes</i>
Inspector of Turns – Lane 2	Inspector of Turns – Lane 5
Inspector of Turns – Lane 1	Inspector of Turns – Lane 6
Inspector of Turns – Lane 0	Inspector of Turns – Lane 7
Chief Inspector of Turns Turn End	Inspector of Turns – Lane 8
	Inspector of Turns – Lane 9

## 5. Use of radios

The purpose of radios is to ensure prompt and accurate communication between the race referee and those officials with whom, due to distance around the pool, face to face communication is difficult. Should an action be observed by an official, which they consider an infraction of the swimming rules or other rules pertaining to the event, the Referee needs to be informed as soon as possible to decide on a course of action at the earliest opportunity. The Radios are all sanitised between each issue. Extra wipes are available from the ATD if anyone wishes to repeat the cleaning themselves.

- Once issued with a radio by the ATD, switch it on. It will be on the correct channel. Adjust the volume so you can hear and be heard. The ATD will assist you when needed.
- Prior to competition commencing, a short radio check will take place. This is usually done after the briefing.
- To use the radio, press down and hold the button on the headset microphone, wait a second or two before speaking, speak clearly and directly. Only one person can speak at a time.  
**Remember: PRESS – HOLD – PAUSE 2 seconds – SPEAK – RELEASE FOR RESPONSE**
- Transmissions should be restricted to messages regarding potential disqualifications. It is not intended for the radios to be used for any other purpose – save an emergency or safety issues.
- A radio message should always commence with the receiving ‘call sign’ repeated twice e.g. ‘Referee, Referee, from Finish Inspector’ The repeated initial call sign allows the recipient to recognise that he/she is being called.
- The receiver should acknowledge the caller and either permit a message to be sent or inform the caller to wait.
- When invited to continue, the caller should confirm their identity and pass the message briefly and concisely giving just enough detail to allow for a decision to be made.
- Chief Inspectors of Turn should not share the details of the DQ on the radio, the Inspector of Turns should only discuss this directly with the referee.

- You should be told when your Radio is issued when you will need to return it to the ATD in the official's area; If you are unsure, please speak to the ATD
- The radios in use for the last session of the day MUST be returned switched off to the Referee's table. Please wait whilst the return is checked off and be careful to ensure the belt clip is still attached to the radio and not to your belt.
- Officials needing radios and their call signs are shown below:

<b>Official</b>		<b>Call Sign</b>
Technical Director		TD
Assistant Technical Director		ATD
AOE Referee		AOE Referee
Deck Referee	One each	Referee
Chief Timekeeper	Start end	Chief Timekeeper
Judges of Stroke	Opposite Referee	Stroke
Ch. Insp. of Turns	Start end	Finish Inspector
Ch. Insp. of Turns	Turn end	Turn Inspector
Finish Judge	Opposite Referee	Place