

England Athletics

Guidance for New Applications for Affiliation

1. Introduction

England Athletics is the membership and development body for grassroots athletics and running clubs in England and welcomes applications for affiliation from new clubs or organisations who wish to make a positive contribution towards the sport of athletics in England.

Our Mission 'To grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential' recognises that our sport is growing, it is attracting new participants and we need to ensure that we have the capacity to deliver attractive and appropriate experiences for athletes and runners in clubs, groups, competitions and events, both within the England Athletics family and in the wider athletics and running community.

Benefits of being an England Athletics affiliated club include:

- Up to £50M Public liability insurance cover
- Insurance and free legal helpline for clubs and their volunteer members involved in the running of the club.
- Central support through Membership Services to help you with registration, rules of the sport, compliance, grievance/disciplinary and eligibility.
- Dedicated club member welfare support and Disclosure and Barring Service checking.
- Online Secretaries Portal to help you manage club memberships and administration.
- Dedicated Club Support Manager team to assist with bespoke club projects which may include facilities, coaching and club governance.
- Eligibility to compete in licensed events.
- Eligibility for club places at the Virgin Money London Marathon – allocation based upon number of registered athletes aged over 18.
- runbritain race licences available at a fixed price specifically for affiliated clubs.
- Support for clubs organising new and existing events through workshops and resources.
- Access to discounted education courses for coaches and leaders.
- Coach development opportunities, including specialist conferences and technical workshops to support your coaches and athletes.
- Club Run programme offering performance coach visits to road running clubs.
- Track Night programme offering performance coach visits to track & field clubs.
- Recognition of your club volunteers at Regional and National awards.

- Access to information, resources and tools to help clubs with their individual development needs such as RunTogether, Athletics 365, whole club development planning and club guidance on asset transfer, employment and legal/tax status.
- ebulletins providing key information on the sport and opportunities available to clubs.
- Exclusive offers and discounts from commercial partners
- Race Licence Discount for races licensed by runbritain for up to 10 licensed events per affiliation year. Subsequent licences will be charged at a commercial rate.

Membership of England Athletics will be granted in three defined categories.

A: Voluntary Club

A voluntary sports club is defined as an amateur, non-profit making collective of unpaid personnel whose main purpose is providing athletics activities and/or competition as a leisure pursuit. This does not exclude any clubs who may fund-raise or generate profits which are 100% re-invested in the club.

B: Non-Voluntary Organisation

Any organised body which provides athletics activity but does not match the definition of a voluntary club. This body could be a commercial business, a leisure centre or provider, charity or a group running with paid leaders from a sports retailer.

C: Virtual Club

All online Club with no designated venue, training base or location. Its membership base will be made up of athletes from all geographical locations and utilise technology on digital platforms to communicate and provide help, assistance and training plans.

The benefits to registered athletes of all three categories are the same irrespective of which type of affiliated body the athletes are members of and offers will change throughout the year.

The procedures in place for considering new club applications are designed to ensure that new applicants will enhance the provision of athletics in this country. It will also help new clubs and organisations to consider some important questions about the type and quality of activities that they wish to provide.

NOTE: To ensure that a club has sufficient safeguards in place for the organisations and individuals, England Athletics, following legal advice, encourage incorporation where a club employs staff or enters into contracts and / or has an interest in property.

D: Association, League or Event Promoter

Associations, Leagues or Event Promoters may also apply to be affiliated members of England Athletics.

- Associations and Leagues who provide individual and inter-club team competition under UKA Rules for the members of affiliated clubs on behalf of the sport's Governing Bodies should affiliate for the purpose of specific event insurance.
- Event Promoters who wish to affiliate for the purposes of organising events under UKA rules and to secure insurance for such competitions or events can apply to be a member of England Athletics.

2. Process

The procedure to apply for affiliation with England Athletics is as follows:

1. Applicants can download the appropriate application form from the England Athletics website. This needs to be completed and sent to Membership Services. A cheque for £150 should be sent along with the application form, made out to England Athletics. No cheques will be banked until a decision has been made.
2. The applicant will receive an acknowledgement receipt from Membership Services.
3. The Membership Services team will ensure all criteria has been met and a decision will be communicated to the applicant within 6-8 weeks.

Further guidance on decision criteria, applicant evidence and the appeals process is offered later in these guidelines.

Clubs and Organisations should avoid making any assumptions about their application until a decision has been made. We advise that applicants do not order club kit, stationery or other items that make reference to being affiliated to England Athletics until a decision has been made.

3. Essential criteria

In order for a **Voluntary Club, Non-Voluntary Organisation or Virtual Club** to be approved for affiliation, England Athletics would expect it to demonstrate the following generic criteria as a minimum:

1. Evidences an approved (by the membership) constitution which has been developed on the England Athletics Constitution Template, for the management of the proposed Club and a registered bank account in the name of the club.
2. The Club must have a Committee made up of representatives from the Club who will fulfil the roles of Club Chair, Club Treasurer, Club Secretary and a person responsible for Membership, Welfare, DBS Verifier, Coaching and Officials. Each specific role must have one individual person assigned however, the Club Secretary and Person responsible for Membership and the Person responsible for Welfare and DBS Verifier can be dual roles and shared by the same person.
3. Demonstrates a positive approach to coach development and education. Clubs should only use appropriately licensed UKA coaches or leaders at a level relevant to their membership base and activities. In exceptional circumstance where a Club has only an LiRF Leader or Assistant Coach in place upon application, we would expect the Club to work with a Club Support Manager to produce a coaching pathway plan which ensures that they have a CiRF or Athletics Coach in place at the Club within the first 12 months.
4. Evidences a commitment to participating in and providing appropriate types of competition for its members as individuals and on an inter-club team basis. A commitment to developing licensed officials to support these events should also be evidenced.
5. Demonstrates provision of new opportunities in the local area, or enhanced activities currently provided by an already affiliated England Athletics club within the local area.
6. Agrees to adopt clear and effective welfare, grievance and disciplinary procedures, with a preference of adopting the England Athletics policies as common club practice.

7. Agrees to inform all their athletes that their data will be passed to England Athletics as detailed in Section 9 below.
8. Agrees to providing accurate data for all athletes that are registered with England Athletics and inform us of any change in details each year.
9. Demonstrates a commitment to engage and support England Athletics local club initiatives where appropriate.
10. Ensures provision of activities is affordable to the local customer base.
11. Demonstrates a commitment to operate in the best interests of the sport with other local providers including affiliated England Athletics clubs and other organisations.
12. Provides accessible opportunities for new runners and athletes, not currently participating in athletics.
13. All Clubs should be committed to offering a positive and welcoming experience to volunteers which enables them to feel valued and develop their skills.

England Athletics is committed to supporting clubs and coaches who work together. Our preference is that clubs wishing to affiliate have first considered establishing a formal link with an already England Athletics affiliated club. We are aware that on occasion new clubs are formed as a result of individual disagreements within existing clubs. So before applying to affiliate we ask clubs to try to resolve issues locally so as not to reduce available resources in the form of volunteers to both clubs.

The criteria for Associations and Leagues are that they agree to abide by the rules and policies of UKA and England Athletics for the competition or events that they organise.

The criteria for Event Promoters are that they agree to abide by the rules and policies of UKA and England Athletics and the terms of the permit(s) or licence(s) issued for the competition or events that they organise.

4. Clubs with low membership

England Athletics recognises that sometimes clubs that apply for affiliation will not yet have a large membership. With all new club affiliations; we would ask that you first contact the most appropriate EA affiliated club to see if there is any appropriate opportunities for your activities to take place as a satellite group of the already existing club. If after discussion, neither club feels that a satellite arrangement is most appropriate, then we would welcome a new club or organisation application.

5. Single Sex Clubs

Single sex clubs are acceptable; we have several precedents of women only clubs already affiliated to England Athletics and although legislation may appear to deny the opportunity for a single sex club, advice has been received that indicates that the principle continues to be acceptable, as long as the other gender has other opportunities to participate in the immediate local area.

6. Club Colours

When considering proposed club colours it is recognised that we should aim to minimise confusion (such as avoiding a club having very similar kit to another nearby club) but it is not possible for every club to have a unique kit.

7. Decision Making Process

Each application will be assessed within the process and timescales outlined above, and will be given one of three possible outcomes:

7.1 Approved

At which point the applicant will be informed and sent an Affiliation Pack.

7.2 Approved with conditions

At which point the applicant will be informed and asked to provide further information or confirm that they agree with any recommendations/conditions before a full approval can be granted. If the applicant is unable to provide this information to the satisfaction of Membership Services, or is unwilling to take onboard the recommendations/conditions, the decision will become a refusal.

Membership Services may decide that an application is generally strong but that certain conditions need to be met before approval can be granted. These conditions might include, though are not limited to, the following:

- 7.2.1** Changing the club's name – for example, if the panel deems it offensive or too similar to the name of another local club.
- 7.2.2** Changing the club's colours – for example, if the panel feel they are too similar to another local club.
- 7.2.3** A need to provide clarity or further information relating to a specific aspect of the application.
- 7.2.4** Issues arising from amendments to our Constitution template.

7.3 Refused

An application can be refused if it does not meet the criteria above or for any other reason that causes concerns over the benefit that approving an application would bring to the sport. At this point the applicant will be informed and given a clear reason or reasons as to why the application has been rejected.

Any decision to reject an application must be based on sound principles, including:

- 7.3.1** The constitution and/or stated aims of the club are contrary to the stated Mission and Values of England Athletics.
- 7.3.2** Substantial concerns exist that the club will not function in accordance with the standard constitution and/or stated aims, or within the stated Mission and Values of England Athletics.
- 7.3.3** The Club refuse to implement the use of England Athletics Secretary Portal for the registration of their athletes and members.
- 7.3.4** The Club do not have sufficient personnel to ensure the Committee is made up of members that are a good representation of the Club membership.
- 7.3.5** We reserve the right to cancel a Clubs affiliation if it is found at a later date that information provided to us on an organisations application form proves to be incorrect.

8. Appeals

An applicant has the right to appeal a decision to refuse an application within one calendar month of receiving news of that decision. This must be made in writing and sent to England Athletics through Membership Services, making it clear why the applicant is appealing and providing any further evidence that may help to support their application.

8.1 Grounds of appeal could include that:

- 8.1.1 The assessment of the club against these criteria has been incorrect. (e.g. a women only club being rejected when actually the provision of women only clubs is part of being proactively inclusive).
- 8.1.2 Additional information being sought by Membership Services was already supplied, was not requested, was not relevant to the application or that insufficient time was given to supply it.

Appeals will be determined by an independent panel appointed by England Athletics and the decision of the Appeals Panel will be final.

An applicant cannot appeal an 'Approve with Conditions' decision until it reaches a refusal stage (i.e. the applicant has rejected the recommendations/conditions).

The decision of the Appeals Panel will be final.

9. Data Protection

A change in government legislation regarding data protection called The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will be in place from 25th May 2018.

When a club member joins or renews his/her membership and provides their details to an England Athletics affiliated club, the member is also registered by the club with England Athletics, which means that the club transfers the member's personal data to England Athletics (i.e. via the Portal). It is therefore vital that members of affiliated clubs are told about this when they join or renew their membership. If your club does not automatically register all members with England Athletics then the position changes slightly (as set out in this letter).

To assist in the process for ensuring that both the club and England Athletics comply with the GDPR in this respect, we have prepared some wording to be included on your own Club application / membership form which we have set out below. Please note that we are also updating our online system so that when you enter data for new members you will be required to confirm that they have been made aware that their information will be shared with England Athletics as well.

In order for us to comply with the GDPR, this must be in place for the registration of athletes with England Athletics from 1st April 2018.

Proposed wording for clubs who register all members with England Athletics

"When you become a member of or renew your membership with [insert name of club] you will automatically be registered as a member of England Athletics. We will provide England Athletics with your personal data which they will use to enable access to an online portal for you (called myPortal). England Athletics will contact you to invite you to sign into and update your myPortal (which, amongst other things, allows you to set and amend your privacy settings). If you have any questions about the continuing privacy of your personal data when it is shared with England Athletics, please contact dataprotection@englandathletics.org."

Proposed wording for clubs who do not register all members with England Athletics

“When you become a member of or renew your membership with [insert name of club] you can also choose to be registered as a member of England Athletics (you will have to register with England Athletics if you ever compete for the club under the UKA rulebook). If you tick the box below we will provide England Athletics with your personal data which they will use to enable access to an online portal for you (called myPortal). England Athletics will contact you to invite you to sign into and update your myPortal (which, amongst other things, allows you to set and amend your privacy settings). If you have any questions about the continuing privacy of your personal data when it is shared with England Athletics, please contact dataprotection@englandathletics.org. If you do not tick the box below and then decide to compete for the club, we will need to register you with England Athletics and we will inform you at that time.

[include appropriate tick box].

A valid email address is required

So that we can confirm with the athlete that their data is correct and, so they can set their privacy settings we will need to have a valid email address for each member. By default, all athletes will be opted out of communications until they have accessed their myPortal account and chosen to opt in.”

Future developments

It is so important that organisations that are processing personal data can assure that individuals have been informed of how their data will be used. We are in the process of reviewing our website and online services that we offer for clubs and athletes. We are investigating the potential for clubs to offer their athletes the option to register directly with England Athletics to further improve the processes around data protection and hopefully make it easier for clubs in the future. We will provide further information as soon as possible in the new year but developments will not impact on athlete registration processes in 2018.

Other considerations

Please note that this may not be the only action your club needs to take to be compliant with the GDPR, so it is important that you also review your general data protection practices. Further guidance can be found at www.englandathletics.org/clubs--community/club-management/gdpr-and-data-protection-advice