

Area Masters Representation

Eligibility

The following criteria should be used when selecting players for Area Masters squads.

The intention of these principles is to ensure Area teams are based on players who play for the clubs in their Area.

Eligibility Criteria 2024, 2025, 2026

Players

- Shall reach the qualifying age, in 5-year groups from age 35 upwards, within the year of competition
- Shall primarily be a bona fide member of a club affiliated to the Area they are representing
- If no club, may qualify on residential grounds
- Shall only represent one Area, in a given year
- Shall only play in one age competition per year

Anything outside the club criteria should be considered as an exception.

Tolerance, or the number of exceptions, to be significantly reduced from 2024-2026.

Club affiliation is defined as the adult membership affiliation to Areas via leagues as set down by England Hockey. A list of clubs affiliated to each Area will be provided.

The year of competition shall be 1st January – 31st December.

Exceptions

- Border club players
- Top age group players
- Temporary working situations
- Ride out an age group
- Flexibility for GKs
- Play a second tournament

Requests for exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Agreed exceptions will be for one year, unless stated otherwise, as the criteria tighten towards 2026.

Should a player move Area, this will be for a minimum of 3 years, unless otherwise agreed in exception.

Notes

Border clubs: *These clubs border two Areas and are listed in the England Hockey list of club affiliations to Areas. Any player in a border club will be able to choose which Area they play for.*

Top age group players: *Men O75 and women O65 may play 2 tournaments if required. They can play down an age group, in addition to their own, to make up a team where that team may have 13 or fewer players. This should not be at the expense of other eligible players in the age group below.*

Temporary working situations: *Working and playing temporarily in a different Area to home, such as members of the UK Armed Forces. If a player continually plays for a club outside their home Area, they should represent that, Area.*

Ride out an age group: *Where a team has low numbers, a player may be able to remain in an Area but must move to the correct Area by the time they move up an age group.*

Flexibility for GKs: *Some flexibility may be extended towards GKs to ensure teams have a keeper.*

Play a second tournament: *Where a team has low numbers (13 or fewer), a player from the age group above may be able to play a second tournament.*

Eligibility Criteria 2027 and further

Following a full 5 years of the tournaments the number of exceptions will be at an absolute minimum.

The criteria for 2027 will be as for 2024-2026 with the following exceptions.

Exceptions

- Border club players
- Top age group players
- Temporary working situations
- Tolerance. Flexibility for GKs. Play a second tournament

There will be no exceptions for

- Top age group players to play out of Area
- Ride out an age group

Should any team fall foul of these criteria, that team may face being disqualified from a tournament or its results set to 0.

How to Request an Exemption

Movement of Areas should ideally only be around changing clubs.

Should a player wish to request an exemption in line with the eligibility criteria, please use the following process: -

Requests will be considered by the masters panel, a subgroup of the 8 Area Masters Committee. Any appeal against an outcome request will be heard by England Hockey and the chair of the Area Masters Committee.

	Action	Information	When	Who
1.	Area age group team lead contacts their Area Masters lead on behalf of player	Reason for request e.g. changing club etc.	As soon as trials begin and before selection	Player and Area age group team lead
2.	Area masters lead makes exemption request on behalf of player via dedicated on-line form	Player details Name. Date of birth. Email Club. Age group Area current Area wish to change to Age group wish to change to Detail of reason for request	As soon as trials begin or at least 5 weeks before the player's tournament	Area masters lead
3.	Request considered	Case by case basis	Once application received	Masters panel
4.	Request outcome	Posted on Area Masters forum.	Within a week of application	England Hockey representative
5.	Request shared	With Area age group lead and player	As required	Area masters lead

Please note: No exemption request is required for border club players.

Area Masters Committee October 2023