

Area Masters Representation **Eligibility 2026 Onwards**

The aim of the Area Masters Tournaments is to be best v best competitive, with the top players in each age group representing their Area. They should be enjoyable and engage as many participants as possible. Masters hockey is about playing with friends, having fun and socialising.

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 **Players**

- Shall reach the qualifying age, in 5-year groups from age 34 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.

Club affiliation is defined as the adult membership affiliation to Areas via leagues as set down by England Hockey.

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

Exceptions

- Border club players
- Historical playing career
- Play down to help get a squad out
- Temporary working situations
- Flexibility for GKs

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

How to Request an Exemption

Should a player wish to request an exemption in line with the eligibility criteria, they should

1. Contact their Area masters lead via their team manager
2. Area masters lead will put in an exemption request on behalf of their player via a dedicated on-line form. This can be to request a change of Area or a different team within an Area. This should be done as soon as possible to the start of trials but at least 5 weeks prior to the start date of the player's tournament
3. The outcome of the request will be posted, as soon as possible, on the Area leads' forum for transparency
4. Area leads to inform their team manager and/or player of the request outcome

Requests will be considered by a subgroup of the 8 Area Masters Committee.

Any appeal against an outcome request will be heard by an independent member of the ASC (not on the subgroup) and England Hockey.

Notes

Border clubs:

These clubs are either

- i. Geographically based in one Area and play all their adult league hockey in another Area
- ii. Play adult league hockey in 2 Areas – this could be men's teams playing in one Area and women's teams playing in a different Area or have men's and/or women's teams playing in 2 different Areas.

Players in a border club can choose which Area they play for, however, if a player has made the decision to play for X Area, we do not expect them to move to a different one.

Historical playing career:

Players who are:

- i. Men O65 (year of birth 1960 or earlier) and women O65 (year of birth 1960 or earlier) can continue to play, for the remainder of their playing career, in the Area they choose.
- ii. Any person who has played, managed or coached a team within their Area for 10 years are able to continue playing for that Area for the remainder of their playing career.

If a player in either of these categories chooses to move to a different Area, then they should continue playing for that Area.

Play down to help get a squad out:

Players who

- i. Have not been selected for their own age category can play down to help another age category field a squad.
- ii. Have played in their own age category, can play in a second age category. Priority is given to players in the correct age category.

If a player is required to play down or in two age categories, this must be requested by exception and approved.

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.

Flexibility for GKs:

Some flexibility may be extended towards GKs to ensure teams have a keeper.

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

Area Masters Committee July 2025