

FRA Junior English Championships

Eligibility Rules Clarification and FAQ

Purpose of this document

In January 2017, the FRA introduced the requirement for eligibility of athletes to compete in the FRA Junior English Championships, **to be proven in advance** in order for points to be allocated fairly and efficiently. Some queries have been raised and were discussed at FRA committee on 12th February 2017. It was agreed that the rules and eligibility section of the FRA handbook are confusing, and that these should be re-written more simply for 2018. In the interim, a consistent message is needed, to clarify the implications, reasons and simplicity of the pre-registration of eligibility proof.

The Races

The following 6 races form the 2017 FRA Junior English Championships – full details in FRA Handbook and www.fellrunner.org.uk. These are competitive (as a national championship series) only for the U13, U15, U17, U19 age categories (see page 51 of the 2017 FRA Handbook for clarification of age categories). An athlete's best 4 performances from any of the 6 races will determine their championship score.

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| Sat 25 th March | Cock Howe Classic, Cleveland |
| Sat 01 st April | West Nab, West Yorkshire |
| Sat 22 nd April | Anni Wa! Cumbria |
| Mon 01 st May | Coiners, West Yorkshire |
| Sun 14 th May | Great Whernside Uphill Only, North Yorkshire |
| Sat 10 th June | Rosendale 50 th Anniversary, Cowpe, Lancashire |

Awards

All awards are to be collected by the athletes at the free Annual "Junior Do" celebration day on 15th July 2017. Full details of the venue will be published on <http://www.felljunior.org.uk> and FRA Juniors Facebook group. It is a great fun day out for athletes from competing clubs to get together and have fun, reflect on and learn from the championship series, and have some fun coaching sessions together.

In addition to the medals and trophies awarded to successful athletes in the English Championships, athletes who have joined the FRA by the time of the last race, will be eligible to order a free commemorative t-shirt if they complete 4 of the races. They will also be eligible to order a free hoody if they complete all 6 of the races. For the 2017 season, athletes who compete in the National Schools Cross Country final race on 25th March, and/or the Lancashire County Championship race on 1st April (both of which have been organised on the same day as FRA English Championship races) will be allowed to count these races towards eligibility for the free commemorative garments. Details on how to claim these awards will be made available on <http://www.felljunior.org.uk> and FRA Juniors Facebook group.

English Championship Eligibility and Pre-Registration

U9 and U11 age categories, whilst eligible for t-shirt and hoody awards, are not allocated championship points and therefore do not need to pre-register their eligibility.

U13, U15, U17, U19 age categories and the clubs they represent, will score points in accordance with the rules set out on p52 & 53 of the FRA Handbook. For individuals to score points, they must submit an online pre-registration form confirming their eligibility, on the felljunior website, which takes only a few minutes: <http://www.felljunior.org.uk/FRAJunior/indexpc.php>

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Individuals must meet the following criteria, which are published on p48 of the 2017 FRA Handbook:

1. First claim member of an English club and registered with England Athletics. **Runners must be members of the FRA if they are not registered with England Athletics**
2. First claim member of a club outside England, which is registered with the appropriate home country athletics federation and either born in England or have been resident in England for a minimum of 12 months prior to the date of the first championship race.
3. Members of the FRA who are not a member of a club registered with England Athletics but either born in England or have been resident in England for a minimum of 12 months prior to the date of the first championship race.

Acknowledging that these criteria are confusing, the following points may help clarify to overall requirements that apply to all athletes:

- **Residency:** individual runners must have been born in England or resident in England for 12 months prior to the first championship race.
- Athletics Body **Registration:** individual runners must be registered with England Athletics, Welsh Athletics, Scottish Athletics or Athletics Northern Ireland, or a member of the FRA.

Teams: team counters must be eligible individuals meeting these residency and registration requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why have the eligibility criteria been introduced?

These criteria have been in place for some time already. With increasing numbers of competitors, the FRA wants to be clearer to competitors about the rules of eligibility to ensure a fair competition in accordance with the rules.

Why must an online form be filled in?

Those managing the large amounts of data from English Championship races are volunteers. The amount of time it would take these people to check eligibility without an online form is unreasonable for the volume of athletes now taking part. However, it takes only a few minutes per athlete, to complete the form. For statisticians to check eligibility after each race, and potentially allocate (or de-allocate) points would create immense complications in managing the overall championship scores.

When must the form be filled in by?

The deadline for completing the form is the day of the race in which the athlete wishes to start scoring points in the Championships.

Why are there different eligibility criteria for U21?

In 2017, a new U21 age category has been introduced, with a set of championship races for an under-represented age group, for young adults who are too old to race in the U19 category. See separate correspondence relating to the FRA U21 Championships.

If I am not a member of FRA, but I am a first claim member of one club, but race for a different club on the fells, can I still be eligible?

Yes. You can obtain "first claim other" status for your fell running club, provided that there is an agreement in place between your fell running club and your first claim EA club. If you are a member of FRA, this complexity is irrelevant, as you are eligible for FRA English Championships already.

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Are FRA members eligible, regardless of status or absence of any other athletics memberships?

Yes

I am not a member of FRA or EA – can I still race in the English Championships?

Yes. Each FRA race is open to anyone. However, your result will not count towards the Championship series. This is so that newcomers may try the sport before committing to the modest membership fee. Allowing athletes who do not join FRA or their national athletics governing body, to compete in FRA Championships, would be unfair on the vast majority of athletes who have joined FRA or their national athletics governing body.

How do I find my FRA number?

It's on the envelope of every FRA fellrunner and handbook you've received, and also on "My Memberships" when logged into the <https://www.sientries.co.uk> website.

How do I find my EA registration number?

You don't need it if you have your FRA number, but you should have received EA membership card and paperwork. If you have mislaid these, there is a convenient link to the EA website, via the FRA online form. This is the EA link <https://myathletics.englandathletics.org/licencecheck/>

Why is it necessary to be a member of FRA or EA to be eligible?

The FRA, a completely voluntarily-run body, organises and funds the FRA championships, providing significant support in terms of labour and funding, to deliver safe, exciting, rewarding and appealing championships. Toilets, medals, prizes (at race and championship level) and an end of year celebration event, which includes coaching, lunch, inspirational presentations, and presentation of awards are all provided by the FRA. In order to provide more open access to competitors, non-FRA members who are EA members are also eligible. The requirement to be a member of the organisation which delivers the championships is fairly typical in athletics.