



**Scottish
Swimming**

Technical Swimsuit Policy (Swimmers aged 13 & under)

Guidance for Swimming Referees & Officials

Version 1, August 2022

Rationale

As part of Scottish Swimming's continued commitment to supporting swimmers of all ages and a period of consultation, a new policy regarding the use of Technical Suits in racing for young swimmers aged 13 years and under will come into effect on September 1, 2022

Why are we championing non-technical suits for young swimmers?

Scottish Swimming's Technical Swimsuit Policy ([HERE](#)) has been developed after consultation with clubs and coaches, and centres around several key rationale, as outlined below:

1. In young swimmers the development of excellent technique and the introduction to training methods is the primary focus. The availability of technical swimsuits brings an undesirable focus on enhanced performance through the use of equipment, and away from technique and training. Young swimmers should feel and understand that it is their own commitment and effort that make a difference when they compete, not the swimsuit they wear
2. Buying technical swimsuits for young swimmers puts the emphasis on delivering the result. The focus of younger swimmers should be less on results, more on learning the process of how to improve and on the enjoyment of the sport and competition. Children should feel and understand that it is their training, commitment and application to the sport that makes a difference when they compete, not the competition suit that they wear.
3. Technical swimsuits are expensive and have a short shelf-life (the qualities that provide the performance advantage start to deteriorate as soon as they are worn in water). Swimming should be inclusive in a way that enables as many people as possible to enjoy the sport and competition without the additional pressure of buying unnecessary, expensive, and potentially detrimental equipment

Scottish Swimming's Technical Swimsuit Policy provides the definition of a 'Technical Swimsuit' and has been introduced to create a cultural shift in our sport to remove the focus on early age group success, underpinning development for progression towards success at youth and senior levels. The policy should be included within all meet conditions and it is the responsibility of Scottish Swimming, SASA Districts, Clubs and Coaches to educate athletes and parents on the spirit of the policy.

Meet Conditions

The National Swimming Committee and the SASA District Swimming committees are asking meet hosts to include the following information in their meet conditions from now until the end of the year at the earliest:

Technical Swimsuits





As of 1st September 2022, new regulations will come into force regarding technical swimsuits. From this date all swimmers 13 years and younger cannot compete wearing technical swimsuits in Scottish Swimming licensed or registered events.

For further information and FAQ's please see link below.




[Technical swimsuit update](#)



Technical Swimsuit Information (Male swimsuits)

	<p>Permitted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chlorine resistant fabric ○ Fabric not compressive ○ Raised seams ○ No leg grippers
	<p>Permitted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chlorine resistant fabric ○ Fabric not compressive ○ Raised seams ○ No leg grippers
	<p>Permitted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chlorine resistant fabric ○ Fabric not compressive ○ Raised seams ○ No leg grippers
	<p>Prohibited</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Water repellent and compressive material ○ Leg grippers ○ Bonded or taped seams

Technical Swimsuit Information (Female swimsuits)

	<p>Permitted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chlorine resistant fabric ○ Fabric not compressive ○ Raised seams ○ No leg grippers
	<p>Permitted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chlorine resistant fabric ○ Fabric not compressive ○ Raised seams ○ No leg grippers
	<p>Prohibited</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Water repellent and compressive material ○ Leg grippers ○ Bonded or taped seams

- Above are examples of permitted and prohibited swimsuits for those aged 13 years or younger, who are competing in Scottish Swimming licensed/sanctioned swimming events
- Traditional one-piece race suits for females, as well as briefs and trunks for male swimmers, are **NOT** defined as technical swimsuits and will be permitted
- FINA-approved knee length suits and jammers will also be permitted provided they are **NOT** manufactured using fabric with water-repellent properties or use any bonded or taped seams, regardless of fabric used to make the rest of the swimsuit
- A technical suit is defined as one made of water repellent and compressive materials, with leg grippers and taped seams. A suit with one individual element is not considered a technical suit

The application of the policy

The table below explains how the policy will be applied at the different levels of Scottish Swimming sanctioned events and how disqualifications will be applied to non-compliant swimsuits

Level of Event	Application of the Policy	Outcome of wearing a technical swimsuit
Scottish National Events	Policy will be applied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compliant swimsuits should be worn at all times. This should be the default position ○ Swimmers will be disqualified post-race
SASA District and Club Meets (Licensed at Level 1)	Policy will be applied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compliant swimsuits should be worn at all times. This should be the default position ○ Swimmers will be disqualified post-race
Club Meets (Licensed and registered at levels 2-4)	Policy will be applied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compliant swimsuits should be worn at all times. This should be the default position ○ Swimmers should be disqualified but referees can use discretion to speak to coach/swimmer after the race to prevent need for disqualification if required ○ Repeat offenders should be disqualified

Processing disqualifications

- The technical infraction information that should be written on the disqualification form should be: **'Non-compliant age group technical swimsuit worn'**
- The disqualification form can be completed by a relevant technical official or referee, whichever is most appropriate. As with any other disqualification report the form must be countersigned by the referee
- The FINA rule number that should be entered on the form should be: **'SWAG 1 – SW Age Group Rule 1'** (page 20 on [FINA RULES EXTRACT](#))
- As with any other infraction **benefit of any doubt should be given to the athlete**
- For all events where disqualifications are being applied, the swimmer will be allowed to swim and they will be disqualified post-race. The disqualification will be recorded in the results

Step by step guide for checking swimsuits

1. Is the swimmer aged 13 or under for the purposes of the competition? If no then the Technical Swimsuit Policy does not apply. If yes, move to step 2.
2. Does the swimsuit follow a traditional swimsuit profile (like the second down pictures)? If yes, then it is permitted. If no, move to step 3.
3. Does the swimsuit have stitched seams? If yes then it is permitted. If no, move to step 4.
4. Does the swimsuit have grippers around the thighs? If no then it is permitted. If yes, this is a technical swimsuit and cannot be worn.

Additional points to consider

- Specific/close examination swimsuit checks within the marshalling/call room areas are not required to be undertaken
- Specific/close examination swimsuit checks behind the starting platforms by the technical officials are not required to be undertaken
- Technical officials can report to the referee any swimmer/swimsuit they consider violates the Technical Swimsuit Policy. The referee will confirm post-race if the swimsuit violates the policy and shall disqualify where necessary
- Referees and technical officials must keep a sufficient distance to athletes and carry out required checks when considered necessary ensuring the athlete is not made to feel uncomfortable at any time
- **Modesty and the wellbeing of the athlete must be maintained at all times**

Useful video for reference

In addition to this document there is a useful video regarding technical swimsuits that Hannah Miley delivered to swimmers and parents at SNAGs 2022 and can be found [HERE](#). Skip to 4m20s and run through to 11m30secs.

Frequently asked questions relating to Scottish Swimming's Technical Swimsuit Policy for athletes aged 13 & under

What is the definition of a technical swimsuit for the purposes of the policy?

A technical swimsuit is defined as one made of water repellent and compressive materials, with leg grippers and taped seams. A suit with one individual element is not considered a technical swimsuit.

Why 13 years and under?

The original proposal was to go with the 12 and under age group; however, on further discussion with the Coaches Technical Panel and others within the swimming community, the decision was taken to extend to the 13 and under age group. The main reasons for this change were:

- Swimmers are unlikely to be entering "performance swimming" at the age of 13 (there are a few exceptions) and therefore delaying the use of a technical swimsuit for a further year was viewed as a positive for both swimmers and those that buy the suits
- The lower age group of the Scottish Age Groups is 13 and under – the 13 and under restriction ensures that all athletes will be competing on a level playing field

How will the 13 years and under on the day and 13 and under at the end of the year impact on the use of technical swimsuits?

From 1st September 2022, if the meet is "age on the day" and a swimmer is 13 or under for that meet, technical swimsuits are **not** allowed. If the meet is run as "age as at 31st December 2022" and a swimmer is 14 by 31st December 2022, then the use of a technical swimsuit **is** allowed.

In both cases, athletes will be competing under **equal** meet conditions.

Are athletes allowed to compete out with Scotland in technical swimsuits?

The technical swimsuit rule for Scotland is applicable only in Scotland. Swimmers will compete under the jurisdiction and rules of the country they are racing in. We would, however, encourage coaches and athletes to take a similar approach to competition when competing out with Scotland for the reasons highlighted at the start of this document.

The Technical Swimsuit Policy also applies to swimmers that are not Scottish but are competing in meets licensed/sanctioned by Scottish Swimming.

Who should I ask if I have further questions about the Technical Swimsuit Policy?

In the first instance you should contact your SASA District STO Convenor, who will escalate to the National STO Committee should further clarity be required to be issued.

National STO Committee Contacts

Name	Position	Contact Email
Neil Valentine	National STO Chair	nstochair@gmail.com
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