



Tournaments explained

| An overview of Open Tournaments
and summary of TTE regulations

Open Tournaments
Season 2025-26

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Introduction

| Table tennis, like all sport, is about competition

Table Tennis England (TTE) is the National Governing Body for the sport in England and is responsible for structuring table tennis competitions. It does this through regulations which it publishes on its website. This document provides guidance to the regulations – in case of any conflict or uncertainty the regulations prevail.

The regulations give the precise definition of an Open Tournament but, in broad terms, it is one that any TTE member may enter.

Open Tournaments are designed to provide a tiered approach in order to enable players to play others at the right level, creating competitive matches and with each level being of a higher standard. It's also a key format where Table Tennis England members can earn national ranking points.

This document provides an overview of Open Tournaments and summarises important elements of the Table Tennis England Regulations:

- to help Tournament Organisers fulfil their role and duties effectively
- to illustrate recommended standards in relation to regulatory minimums
- to provide practical illustrations of how the regulations apply

This is aimed at both first-time and experienced tournament organisers.

For clarity, these terms are used in this document with the following definitions:

- **TOURNAMENT** – a self-contained one or two-day competition in which a series of events are played in one or more age and/or gender categories
- **EVENT** – a specific event within a tournament for individual players or doubles or teams, each of which may be restricted to players of a particular age and/ or gender category
- **TIERS** – the three different levels/ standards of Open Tournament (1*, 2* and 4*)
- **OFFICIALS/ MATCH OFFICIALS** – this refers to the three types of technical officials: Referees (including Deputy and Assistant Referees), Umpires and Tournament Organisers (often abbreviated to 'TO')
- **RANKING/ RATING** – this refers to the TTE national ranking/ rating framework and published lists

For instance, the Club Banana Tournament might take place on a Saturday and Sunday, with Cadet Boy's Singles + Cadet Girl's Singles events on Day 1, and Junior Boy's Singles + Junior Girl's Singles + Mixed Junior Doubles events on Day 2.

Why we regulate

Light-touch regulation is intended to be positive and beneficial for all concerned, rather than restrictive.

It helps promotion, prevents clashes, means that entrants can expect a consistent and standardised approach, and gives organisers confidence through support mechanisms.

Why do we Regulate?

To create a structured calendar of opportunity

To safeguard the regulated competition from other clashes

To safeguard other member competitions/ activity from clashes

To support the organiser

To support the entrants

Guarantee of quality and consistency inc technical officials

Safeguarding

What are the Benefits?

National coordination

National promotion to members

Tiered structure creates competitive and experiential pathway for players and officials – part of cohesive framework not just isolated activity

To award National ranking points – and validate the integrity of competitions from which these are gained

Entrants/ Parents have confidence in quality assurance of environment, processes and standards

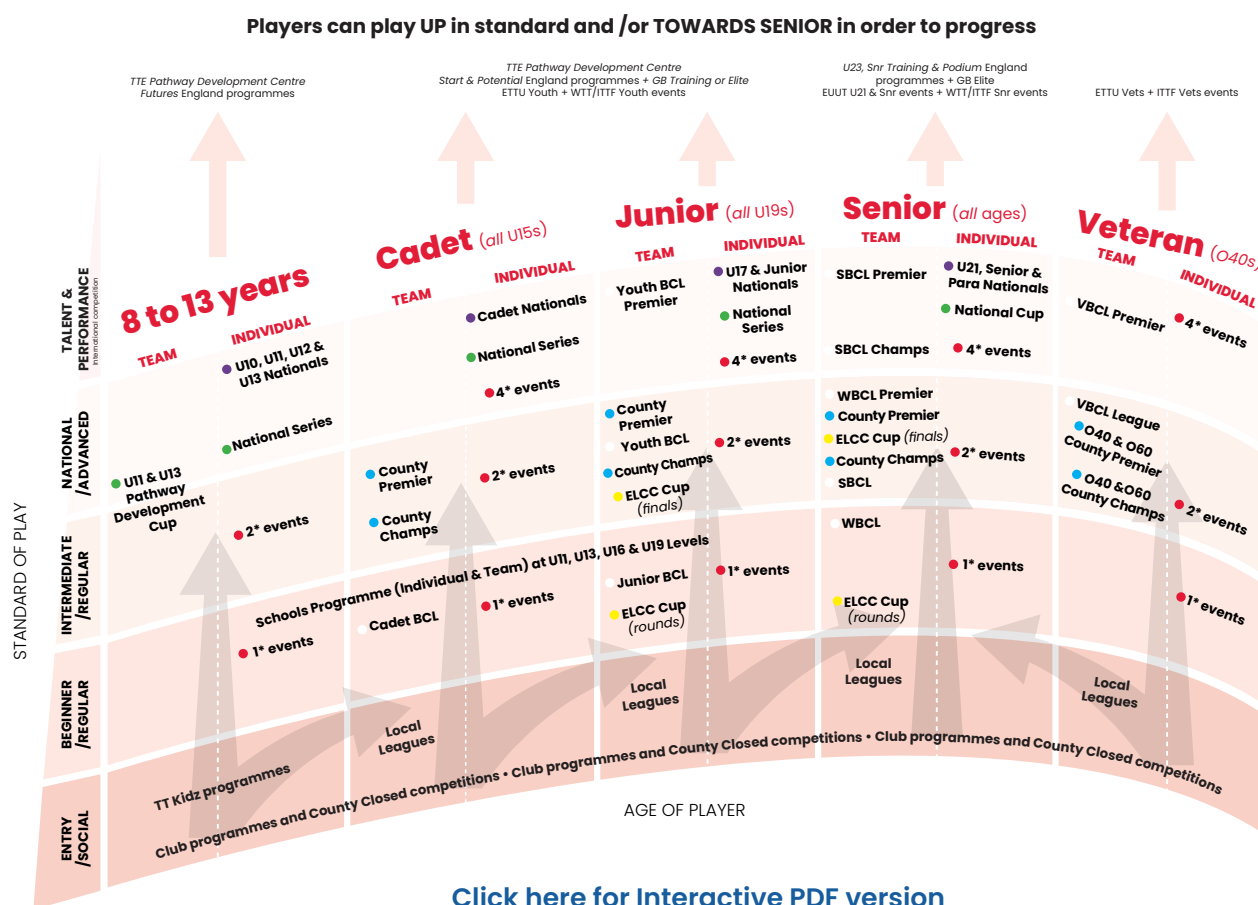
Organisers have recourse to TTE policies, regulations & guidelines – and can escalate (eg) disciplinary or child protection issues

Suspended members are actively prevented from entering (eg confidential/ sensitive issues arising from safeguarding, in liaison with police & local authorities)



1. Player Pathway Model

TTE competition formats as a player pathway by age-group and by standard – the Tiered Open Tournaments are clearly shown at the different levels.



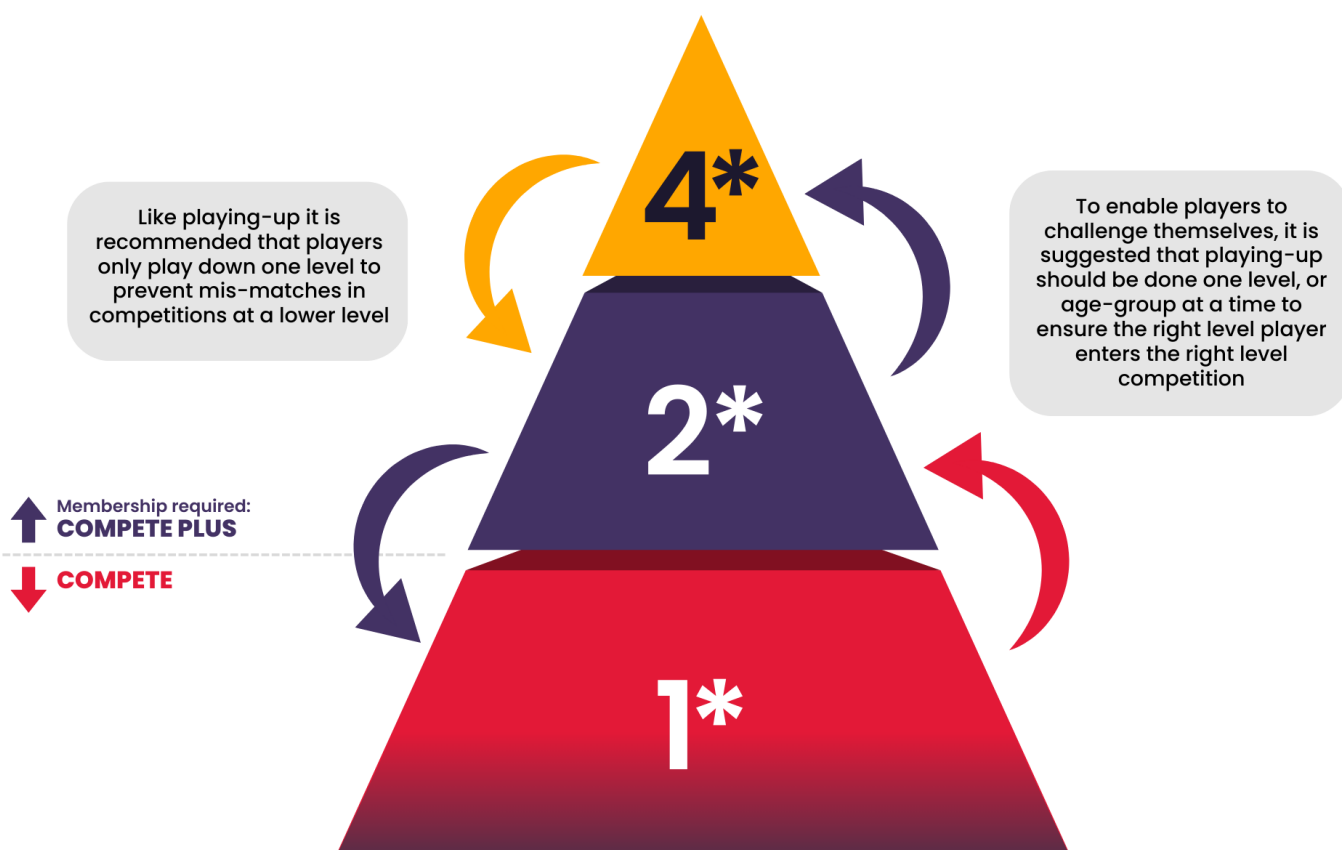
Players looking to challenge themselves can play-up the 'star rating' or play-across the age-group. For instance, a Junior player looking to take a step forward from Junior 1* tournaments could play a Junior 2* (up a tier) or a Senior 1* (across an age-group)

2. Tiered Open Tournaments overview

Table Tennis England's Tiered Open Tournaments are the frequent, tiered pathway of open tournaments, accessible to all – the bread and butter of tournament play!

This section provides an overview of the structure and how it fits together.

There are three tiers – 1* (the lowest standard/ level), 2* and 4* (the highest standard/ level) (Please note that there is no 3*).



3. Regulated and Non-regulated competition

| Regulated competition

A competition that is authorised and regulated by TTE, under specific and defined regulations.

Regulated competitions can either be:

OPEN

A competition that can be entered by any individual affiliated to TTE, including reciprocal affiliations (members of other home countries) and visiting players (members of other ITTF associations). There are 3 tiers of Open Tournaments – 1*, 2* and 4*.

INVITATION

A nationally authorised tournament which complies with all the regulations for an Open Tournament except that it is not open to every Affiliated Member. This includes National Championships, National Series and National Cups.

CLOSED

A competition that is authorised and regulated by a TTE affiliated organisation (county, club or league) and restricted to its bona fide membership.

It is key to understand when a 'closed competition' becomes an open competition, i.e. what is the threshold?

- The point at which a Club competition invites participants outside the club membership it becomes a League-regulated competition.
- The point at which a League-regulated competition invites participants outside the league membership it becomes a County-regulated competition.
- The point at which a County-regulated competition invites participants outside the county membership, it becomes an Open competition.

Closed competitions are designed only for existing members of that particular club/ league/ county. Where a closed competition attracts genuinely new (or returning) players to Table Tennis England, this may continue to be deemed closed.

| Unregulated competition

A competition run by an organisation that is not affiliated to TTE (such as BUCS, TT365, VETTS, U3A etc) – these competitions are not governed by TTE, are not part of TTE jurisdiction, and are separate and distinct.

All tournaments organised by affiliated organisations are considered to be regulated competitions to which the relevant regulations apply.

There are two exceptions:

1. An internal club tournament for (and only for) its own members.
2. A tournament which is a “Legacy Event”. “Legacy Events” are defined by the Regulations, but examples are tournaments which restrict the racket coverings that can be used (eg a ‘hard bat’ tournament) and a tournament which uses a different number of points to decide the outcome of a game (eg a ‘handicap’ competition which is played up to 21)

If necessary, the Tournament Approval Panel (TAP) will determine at its sole discretion whether a specific competition is Open, Invitation or Closed, or constitutes a ‘legacy’ event.

An ‘engagement/development activity’ for new and inexperienced players may exist outside of this structure – please see Section 10.



4. What does an Open Tournament look like?

The essential characteristics of open tournaments – who they are aimed at, what they look like, and what might you consider as an organiser

CATCHMENT

Standard – what cohort is audience for each level?

1*

Regular, localised, accessible, affordable

Players who have been playing consistently for a short while but are inexperienced competitive players or are players returning to the sport after a long absence. Ideal for those wanting to start to build a national ranking and prepare for other similar level competitions, or just to compete regularly at a local level

2*

Bigger pond, larger competition, increasing standard

Established players who have been players for a consistent period across competitive environments. Players aspiring to become highly ranked players, are competing regularly as part of their enjoyment of table tennis, or younger players wanting to progress in the sport

4*

Pinnacle competition, prize-money, attracting foreign players, eligibility/ qualification route for National Championships

Aimed at the better players in the country with high-ranking positions, and wanting to compete against others of a similar standard

Size

Smaller; this might typically comprise of 4 tables or more

Medium; this might typically comprise of 8 tables or more

Larger; this might typically comprise of 16 tables or more

4. What does an Open Tournament look like?

	1* No restrictions	2* No restrictions	4* Typically 4-5x Senior and 5-6x Cadet/ Junior tournaments annually
Frequency			
Playing Formats + singles/doubles/ team events + age-group sub-categories + scheduling	At discretion of organiser – please see Recommended Formats & Preferences section Unless a dedicated women and girls only tournament, must have both male and female gender categories for main events and all banded events at the point of entry	At discretion of organiser – please see Recommended Formats & Preferences section Unless a dedicated women and girls only tournament, must have both male and female gender categories for main events and all banded events at the point of entry It is highly recommended that Senior 4* tournaments follow the following broad format: Men's Women's (MS), Women's Singles (WS), Men's Banded events, Women's Banded events, Men's U21s, Women's U21s, Veterans Mixed Singles & Restricted 22-39 Mixed Singles	
Entry costs	At discretion of organiser, but recommended to remain largely commensurate with similar tournaments ('market rate')		

4. What does an Open Tournament look like?

	1*	2*	4*
Prize money	Not expected, and not necessarily recommended due to intended target cohort	Not expected	At discretion of organiser – an expectation at Senior 4* tournaments
Eligibility	It is recommended that entry is open to TTE members and reciprocal members rated below the Top 30 for men and boys and Top 20 for women and girls in the appropriate age-group/ sub-age-group, and players who would be dummied as such, at the entry deadline	It is recommended that entry is open to all TTE members and reciprocal members	It is recommended that entry is open to all TTE members and reciprocal members excluding never-rated or current <200pt players in the appropriate age-group/ sub-age-group – but including formerly-rated or foreign players who would be dummied >200pts, at the entry deadline
National Championships eligibility/ qualification	n/a	n/a	• Cadet and Junior players must play a minimum number of designated tournaments for National Championships eligibility • Direct qualification route and 'Leaderboard' qualification opportunity for Cadet and Junior National Championships

4. What does an Open Tournament look like?

	1*	2*	4*
Why run this tournament?	Hosting a 1* provides a key playing and development opportunity for your Club's youth programmes and club players – keep it local!	Allow your club players to stretch themselves against better players and from further afield – and an opportunity to gain more national ranking points!	Top players will want to be at these Senior prize money events – and the best Cadet & Junior players in England will need to compete in order to gain eligibility for National Championships and/or to qualify directly. These tournaments will be a highlight of the annual calendar, with the full attention of the TT community!
What is the cost to run this tournament?	Flat rate levy payable to TTE of £65 per tournament	Flat rate levy payable to TTE of £125 per tournament	• Flat rate levy payable to TTE of £250 per tournament for age-groups other than Senior • English hosts of Senior tournaments can apply to receive financial support from TTE towards delivery costs in Season 25/26, and no levy is payable

The naming conventions are consistent with previous similar competitions, but the nature and requirements for each tier has changed for Season 25/26 to make these events easier and more cost-effective to deliver and enter.

If you are a new competitor at one of these events, please see our introductory [Guide to Entering a National Competition video](#)

5. Who can host?

Only TTE affiliated organisations or members can host a TTE regulated tournament:

i) A designated officer¹ of a Premier Club/Associate Club/League/County can apply to host a 1*/2*/4* if their individual membership and organisation affiliation is current. If the membership and affiliation is lapsed or pending, these must be renewed before an application can be considered.

The affiliation process will provide Public Liability Insurance. For Premier and Associate clubs, the process will ensure an Equal Opportunities Policy and Safeguarding Policy is in place, and that a Club Welfare Officer has current Safeguarding certification. Leagues and Counties should independently ensure these elements are all in place.

All affiliated organisations should ensure that they undertake a Risk Assessment exercise, including consideration of 1st Aid, DBS and training requirements + procedures for accident, incident and emergency.

ii) A Registered Team/TTE Member²/Technical Official can apply to host a 1*/2*/4* on the following basis:

- Their affiliation/ membership is current (not lapsed)
- They are not in legal dispute with TTE, have outstanding monies due to TTE, are in the process of appeal, are currently subject to suspension or other sanction under the Company's Disciplinary Regulations, are in breach of or have acted in such a way to be deemed contrary to TTE's articles, objectives, codes of conduct, policies, regulations or processes
- They submit appropriate evidence of minimum standards and safeguards for approval, inc:
 - Public Liability Insurance
 - Equal Opportunities Policy – adoption of [TTEs policy](#) is acceptable
 - Safeguarding Policy – adoption of [TTEs policy template](#) is acceptable
 - Current safeguarding certification for the individual fulfilling safeguarding responsibilities at the tournament (eg Tournament Organiser) You can access a recognised training course for free here: [Safeguarding In Sport Course | Free Online Safeguarding Training](#)
 - Risk Assessments, including consideration of 1st Aid, DBS and training requirements + procedures for accident, incident and emergency – for guidance please see [Sport England's 'Buddle' resource website](#)

TTE Regulated Tournaments held in other territories (eg by TT Wales or Jersey TTA) under the scope of a Memorandum of Understanding will be considered under ii) above.

6. Delivery Framework

Playing conditions, equipment and officiating standards

Regulations for the physical environment and officiating requirements have been relaxed from Season 25/26 onwards to help make these tournaments easier and more cost-effective to run for hosts and to enter by participants.

	1*	2*	4*
Membership requirements	Compete	Compete Plus	Compete Plus
National Ranking eligibility/ results submission	Flexible – yes or no	Yes	Yes
National Ranking Weighting ³	0.75x event weighting Automatic 'starter event' status for all age-group events at Cadet & Junior tournaments	1.5x event weighting +Last 16 bonus points	1.75x event weighting (other than senior)/ 2.0x (senior only) +Last 16 bonus points
Application timeframe	Typically 3 months+	Typically 6 months+	Typically 6 months+
Tournament Organiser qualification	Minimum TTE member	Minimum TO2	Recommended: TO3 Minimum: Experienced TO2 approved by TAP & TOC Committees for maximum 1yr only

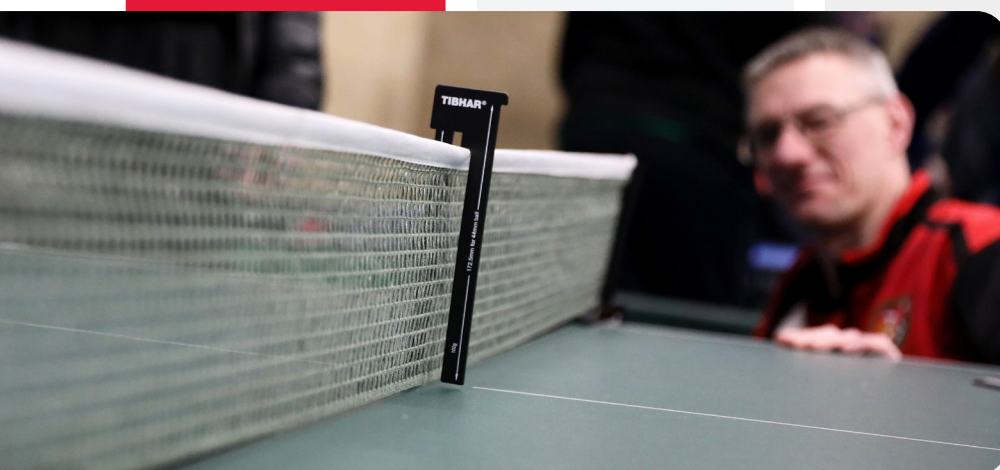
6. Delivery Framework

	1*	2*	4*
Referee qualification	Minimum TTE member	Minimum L1 (TR)	Recommended: L2 (NR) Minimum: Experienced L1 (TR) approved by TAP & TOC Committees for maximum 1yr only
Deputy Referee qualification	-	-	Minimum L1 (TR)
Umpire	Designated individual preferred	Recommended: L1 Umpire for finals in main male and female categories Minimum: Designated idual preferred	Recommended: At least one designated Table Coordinator for 1-4 tables, at least two for 5-8 tables and so on for Group and early knock-out rounds. This complement must include a minimum of two L2 Umpires, or they be acting in a coordinating role for the duration. Umpires for all semi-finals and finals must hold a valid Umpire qualification, and main events semi-finals and finals must include a minimum of two L2 Umpires. Minimum: Umpires for all finals must hold a valid Umpire qualification, and Umpires for all main events semi-finals and finals must hold a valid Umpire qualification and include a minimum of two L2 Umpires.



6. Delivery Framework

	1*	2*	4*
Organising Committee	Recommended	Required	Required
Entry commitment	-	-	Valid entries from the top 50 ranked males and top30 TTE ranked females in the event age-group must be accepted
Playing conditions & equipment	Minimum requirement: • 8.5x4m x3m high • 300lux • ITTF approved balls • Surrounds at ends and corners	Minimum requirement: • 9x4m x3m high • 300lux • ITTF approved tables and nets • ITTF approved balls • Surrounds at ends and corners Recommended: • 10m x 5 x 3m • 500lux idual preferred	Cadet: Recommended: 10m x 5m x 3m Minimum: 9m x 4.5m x 3m Junior: Recommended: 10m x 5m x 3m all courts Minimum: 9m x 4.5m x 3m 10m x 5m x 3m for Show Courts Senior/ Veterans: Recommended: 10m x 5m x 3m Minimum: 9m x 4.5m x 3m 10m x 5m x 3m for Show Courts and Doubles matches All Age-groups • 500lux • ITTF approved tables and nets • ITTF approved balls • Surrounds on all sides



6. Delivery Framework

	1*	2*	4*
Score Indicators	At least for finals	All matches	All matches
Programme	-	Match schedule	Match schedule
Finals	-	Clearly defined 'show table'	Clearly defined 'show table'



7. Key Regulations & Explanations (FAQs)

This section provides a summary of key requirements and approaches, and what the regulations mean in terms of practical application. Please note that these key principles apply similarly to club hosts of national competitions such as Cadet/ Junior/ Senior British Clubs Leagues, National Cups and National Series.

Can I hold a 21-up, handicap or hard-bat event?

Not as part of the Open Tournament structure – all such tournaments must conform to 'standard' ITTF/ TTE regs. However, a club, league or county may hold a 'legacy' tournament using non-regulated formats such as handicap or hard-bat for its own bona fide members

Does every participant in a regulated tournament have to be a TTE member?

Yes – and the level of membership required will depend on the level of the tournament

What if a player from Wales/ Ireland/ Scotland/ Europe or elsewhere in the world wants to enter my tournament?

Existing members of other Table Tennis Associations can obtain a 'reciprocal membership' by contacting the TTE membership department – for the higher-level tournaments, a small upgrade fee is also payable

What happens if a player or an entrant is not a member?

Non-members should not be permitted by the Organiser to compete; please ensure before the tournament takes place that all entrants are members at the appropriate level by liaising with the TTE membership department. The membership team will also be able to advise if a player is currently under suspension

7. Key Regulations and Explanations (FAQs)

Can suspended members take part?

No – members under suspension cannot take part in regulated activity – and on some occasions may not be permitted to be present at a TTE tournament; the Membership Team will advise, if applicable

What are the Table Tennis England age-groups for regulated competition?

There are four core age-groups in regulated competition – Cadet (U15), Junior (U19), Senior (all ages) and Veterans (O40s)

Sub-categories may exist in each core category, for example: U15s may have sub-categories of U13s or U11s; Juniors may have sub-categories of U17s; Senior may have sub-categories of U21s; Veterans may have sub-categories of Over 60s

Which age-group(s) a player is eligible for is determined by their age on 31 December of the season in question. The season runs 01 August to 31 July each year. As an illustration, a Cadet (Under 15) player must be aged 14 or under on 31 Dec of the relevant season. If in doubt, please contact competitions@tabletennisengland.co.uk

Will my tournament carry national ranking points?

Yes – unless the tournament organiser chooses to opt-out (for 1* tournaments only)

What does the requirement to run both male and female categories mean in practice? My tournament is small and may not achieve a critical mass of women & girl players ...

Unless a dedicated women and girls only tournament – at entry stage, separate gender options must be offered in main events and all banded events in order to maximise the potential opportunity for standalone women or girl's categories to take place. Practically, it is appreciated that depending on entries a critical mass may not be achieved, and a referee may need to amalgamate these into an open/ mixed event

7. Key Regulations and Explanations (FAQs)

What should I do if a player defines as a different gender?

There are currently two gender categories for regulated table tennis – male and female. A TTE player's gender is defined by their current membership category, and that is the gender in which they are able to compete. If you or a tournament entrant have any queries on gender identity or gender reassignment and how it relates to your competition, please contact HR@tabletennisengland.co.uk

Please note that this remains an evolving landscape, and may change for Season 26/27

What should I consider if a wheelchair player enters my event?

The Equality Act requires the organisers of activity to make reasonable provision and adjustment for individuals with a protected characteristic(s), including disabilities. Please be aware of the wheelchair compliant status of your equipment and note the adaptive rules applicable should an entrant to your event be a wheelchair user, as per ITTF and TTE regulations – you can see [further info here](#)

Can I run a tournament that is open to everyone but is non-regulated?

Any competition by a TTE affiliated organisation is by definition regulated and a tournament for players outside county boundaries is by definition open – and therefore subject to national approval, rules, formats and sanctions etc. But a 'closed' League/ County competition may be an option for you instead (see Section 3) ... or if the tournament is for non-ranked players (only) then potentially the competition might meet the definition of an engagement/ development activity (see Section 10)

But some other organisations say they run 'open tournaments'?

References to an 'open tournament' in this document mean an open tournament as defined by TTE. Other organisations may use the same term to mean a competition they define as an open tournament, but which is different to a TTE open tournament.

A competition run by an organisation that is not affiliated to TTE (such as BUCS, TT365, VETTS, U3A etc) is not governed by TTE, is not part of TTE jurisdiction, and is separate and distinct. These organisations may still apply to deliver TTE-regulated tournaments if they wish

7. Key Regulations and Explanations (FAQs)

Can I run a competition on behalf of a non-affiliated organisation?

A tournament which a TTE affiliated club, league or county runs for more than its own bona fide members is automatically a regulated competition and an open tournament. As such it must abide by the regulations for an open tournament and, in particular, obtain permission from TAP

Are there a minimum number of tables required to run a 1*, 2* or 4* tournament?

No – there is no minimum requirement for the number of tables to run an authorised event at each tier, but the number of tables and entry capacity, as well as standard of players, may help inform which tier you apply for

Do tables at my event have to be the same make and colour?

This is preferred, but not required – so long as tables are ITTF approved, a mix of makes and colours can be used if necessary

Is a levy payable?

Yes – a small levy is payable to TTE depending on the level of regulated tournament – £65 for a 1*, £125 for a 2* and £250 for a 4* tournament (excepting English hosts of Senior 4*s)

Can an Official at the tournament also play in an event?

No – a single individual cannot play and also fulfil an official's role at the same time

Can the same individual fulfil more than one Officials role at the same time?

No – the responsibilities of the different officials are distinct and a single individual cannot fulfil more than one role at the same time

7. Key Regulations and Explanations (FAQs)

Where do I find details of local Officials – and how can I access training to become an Official?

You can use TTEs 'find an official' webpage [here](#), and find forthcoming training opportunities [here](#)

What happens if an Official issues a yellow or red card at my tournament?

Any cards issued by qualified officials at a regulated tournament will be logged as part of the national sanctions scheme. If a player receives multiple sanctions, they may be suspended for a defined period.

Cards issued to players should be recorded on TTE form OT3 and submitted to the TAP Sanctions Administrator within 3 days of the tournament ending; this facilitates any period of player suspension to start on the Saturday following the end of a tournament

Do I have to ask my County to support my planned tournament?

Yes, please. When you ask them, your County should check to see if a planned tournament clashes with any other local commitments. If there is a legitimate clash, then an alternative date should be explored. If the County is unable or unwilling to engage with the application process, or an agreed position cannot be reached, then the Tournament Approval Panel will progress on the basis of available information

If your tournament takes place in a different county to where you are based, you should please ask both counties for their support

Can I use a sponsor's name in connection with the event? photographs?

Yes – but TTE reserves the right at its sole discretion to appoint a national sponsor, and/ or to reject the association of a sponsor at local level. If you are unsure, please contact competitions@tabletennisengland.co.uk

The Open Tournaments are wholly owned by The English Table Tennis Association, trading as Table Tennis England, and the sponsorship rights for events remain with Table Tennis England

7. Key Regulations and Explanations (FAQs)

Can I stream my tournament, and can I or other participants take photographs?

Maybe – TTE do not restrict organisers from streaming or taking photographs at Open Tournaments, unless otherwise advised. However, you should please check the relevant policies and guidance with particular reference to UI8s, including your own Safeguarding policy and TTE Codes of Conduct and policies for Streaming/ Photography/ Social Media use

The Open Tournaments are wholly owned by The English Table Tennis Association, trading as Table Tennis England, and the rights for broadcasting or streaming of any events remain with Table Tennis England

Can I use TTE's national tournament entry and payment system?

The national system is not yet available for 1*/2*/4* tournaments, but is expected to be piloted and then rolled-out to all regulated open tournaments in due course. This will also include the tournament application process and post- tournament reporting/ submission of ranking results. In the meantime, we suggest you use a hard-copy entry form or googledocs (or similar)

What information must be included on the entry form, and where will this be promoted?

Please see Appendix B for a template of information that must be included on the entry form for an Open Tournament

You must send a draft entry form to the TAP Entry Form Checker for approval at least 6 weeks before the date of the tournament. When it has been checked, a copy will be returned to you with a note of any alterations required, and the original will be retained for reference.

You must send the finalised entry form, incorporating the advised alterations, to the TAP Entry Form Checker at least 4 weeks before the date of the tournament, so that it can be added to the TTE website. If you publish the entry form on a website or platform separate to the TTE website then the entry form must be identical to that approved by TAP

7. Key Regulations and Explanations (FAQs)

Why does the name of the players' coach need to be added to the scoresheet?

The name of any individual acting in a support role in a player's corner must be entered onto the scoresheet. The names of these 'athlete support personnel' (eg coach, parent, team captain, teammate etc) are required so that Table Tennis England complies with the requirements of both the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and UK Anti-Doping (UKAD)

How soon do I need to submit the ranking results?

Results for ranking tournaments need to be received by TTE no later than 7 days after the tournament, or by the ranking deadline (the first Friday of each month), whichever is the sooner. Email submission is preferred. If you use post, then please use a guaranteed/ trackable postal service, and avoid sending your only copy

A TTE ranking results template is the preferred format and helps avoid data entry errors and delays – please contact help@tabletennisengland.co.uk for details. Alternatively, you can send copies of the completed matchcards and knockout brackets to help@tabletennisengland.co.uk

Do I need to submit participation data to TTE?

Yes, please – along with the levy and ranking results, we need to know how many players competed in each event category at your tournament, as part of national participation monitoring

What happens if I have a safeguarding concern or a conduct issue?

All participants at regulated competitions are subject to TTE's Safeguarding Policy and Codes of Conduct.

As an organiser, you should be familiar with these documents, as well as TTE's Privacy/ Data Protection policy, TTE anti-doping regulations, TTE's Photography & Livestreaming Guidelines – and any other relevant documents – in addition to the competition Rules & Regulations

If you have a concern, or a concern is raised with you, please contact the relevant person at TTE at the first opportunity

| 7. Key Regulations and Explanations (FAQs)

What happens if I receive a complaint about my tournament?

We expect that any complaints received by a Tournament Organiser about their tournament are acknowledged, taken seriously, investigated appropriately, and then responded to in a timely fashion. Please try to stay objective and not feel 'blame'! This is the best and most effective way of addressing the issue, and – if necessary – making positive adjustments for future tournaments.

However, if a player or parent feels they have not been listened to, or that the issue was suitably serious, they will typically follow-up direct with TTE – who will follow national complaint processes. If a serious issue or regulatory breach is found to have occurred, then this will be raised with the TO and may ultimately impact on the sanctioning of future tournaments

Who is responsible in the event of an accident or incident?

Everyone has a legal duty of care to others – and the essential question is 'what is a reasonable expectation?' Ultimately anyone attending a competition organised by a member or affiliated organisation will have a legitimate and reasonable expectation that the organiser has made appropriate consideration of risks, and put appropriate controls in place

The applicant/ Tournament Organiser is the tournament host and is responsible for the safe operational delivery, including safeguarding, 1st aid, security, and in the event of injury or emergency.

The applicant/ Tournament Organiser should produce their own risk assessments and implement appropriate controls as required. These should be specific to the venue, its equipment and facilities, the activity taking place, the age and standard of the participants, and also take into account any processes and requirements stipulated by the venue

The applicant/ Tournament Organiser should hold public liability insurance for the tournament (see section 5), and be able to evidence any current training/ certification indicated by risk assessment, such as safeguarding, 1st aid or DBS check

8. Recommended Formats & Preferences

Improving the quality of competition experiences for players should remain the key focus when considering formats.

This section provides an overview of playing formats, scheduling and other ‘added value’ considerations.

The national competition review established that the three largest determining factors in whether a player enters an event are:

- 1. The number of matches**
- 2. Distance to travel**
- 3. Competing against players of a similar standard**

Point 1 and overall competition experience is addressed below. Points 2 and 3 underpin the framework of Open Tournaments. Combined, these form an important part of the application and assessment process.

Additionally, Table Tennis England have national priorities to (eg) provide opportunities to under-represented groups, and provide appropriate pathways for talented youth players.



Length of day

The majority of TTE members advise that an optimal competition day (start of registration to end of final game) should run for about 8 hours. If this is not possible, more members prefer shorter days (6hrs) to longer (10hrs). Ideally, tournaments shorter than 6hrs, or longer than 10hrs, should be avoided, though this will also depend on what event categories each individual can enter.



Number of games

The optimal number of matches for a player per day is 7-9, with more members then preferring fewer (eg 4-6) rather than more (10+). Tournaments and playing formats with fewer than 4 matches should be avoided.

In general, younger players will tend to prefer more matches than adults, and those playing in lower-standard competitions will tend to prefer more matches than those in higher-standard competitions.

8. Recommended Formats & Preferences



Preferred Formats

Playing formats with more guaranteed games are significantly preferred. Potential options include:

- Progressive KO (eg to final placings)
- 'Group-to-group' formats, where an initial round is preliminary, and a subsequent phase places all 1st places together in a group, all 2nd places together in a group, and so on.
- Larger group stages with smaller KO stages
- Inclusion of Consolation events
- Event formats where individuals can enter multiple categories at the same tournament – eg an open singles + age-group and/or banded events

Straight KOs, and small group/ large KOs should be avoided.

Please note that the number of matches in a group increases exponentially with more players – a group of 4 requires 6 matches, a group of 6 requires 15 matches, and a group of 8 requires 28 matches.

Your referee can assist with the details of formatting and scheduling. Please also see Section 12 for Tournament Stationary.



Preferred Categories

Key considerations include:

- U11 and/or U13s categories at Cadet tournaments
- U21 or U23s categories at Senior (All Ages) tournaments

National priorities will continue to evolve over time. Please note that inviting entries for Women's & Girls categories is a mandatory requirement, and that standalone events are run if a critical mass is achieved; events should only be combined if a standalone event is not viable once entries are established.



8. Recommended Formats & Preferences



Venue/Tournament

The overall provision for players and spectators, and the general tournament attributes, will also be important factors. Consideration might include:

Venue Provision

- Seating
- Changing facilities
- Parking
- Refreshments
- Accessibility/ DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliancy
- Standard and condition of tables
- Wheelchair compliant tables
- Connectivity (WiFi)
- PA system

Etc

Tournament Attributes

- Entry cost(s)
- Capacity (number of participants)
- Prize money (if applicable)
- Exceeding minimum regulatory standards:
 - Qualification(s) of Technical Official(s)
 - Court size, flooring and lighting
- Added value – eg TV display screens, show court area, printed programme

Etc

Tournament hosts should look to maximise these factors wherever possible in order to improve the competition experience for participants.



9. Further Guidance

Player membership

	1*	2*	4*
Compete	✓	✗	
Compete Plus	✓	✓	
Compete level + a <i>One-Time Tournament Top-Up</i> (for each tournament)	n/a	✓	
<i>One-Time Tournament Pass</i> (for each tournament; available soon)	✓	✓	

- Members of other Table Tennis Associations (in the UK, Europe, or worldwide) can obtain a 'reciprocal membership' for 1* Tournaments by contacting the TTE membership department with evidence of their existing membership; for 2* and 4* Tournaments, a small upgrade fee is also payable
- It is NOT possible to obtain memberships/reciprocal memberships/top-ups/passess at the tournament – this must be done in advance and ideally during working days/hours

National Ranking & Rating Points

- You can find out more about national ranking and rating points – including how new players get initial ratings, event weightings, bonus points, what 'starter events' are, and how an organiser/ referee can seed/ band players for events [here](#)
- An event draw will use the rating list current at the time of the draw – which specific rating list might underpin seeding or banding for your event depends when in the season the draw takes place:

From mid-Aug to mid-Sept:	'new season ratings' lists (showing players when they 'graduate' to new age-group eligibility on 01 August)
From mid-Sept to end-July:	monthly published rating lists
From early to mid-August:	Recommended that the rating list from July of previous season is used, adjusted as necessary to reflect new age-category eligibility

Draw information should be clearly stated in the tournament documentation and entry form.

When the draw is published, it is recommended that players seed numbers are stated in brackets after their names – eg Peter Smith (3)

Player Sanctions

For all information relating to the 'red and yellow' card scheme, [click here](#)

Tournament Organisers

- The Tournament Organiser is ultimately responsible on behalf of the applicant for the safe and effective delivery of the tournament
- The Tournament Organiser should be available at all times when tournament participants are on-site, and is not able to participate in the tournament as a player

The following is a summary of the main duties of a TO and should be read in conjunction with the separate 'Tournament Organiser Duties' document:

- organise venue, facilities and equipment
- organise referee, umpires and volunteers
- manage player entries and payments
- ensure all entrants are TTE members
- prepare a Risk Assessment for the tournament in consultation with the venue and ensure that it is communicated effectively and delivered as required
- ensure all players, match officials and spectators are aware of the emergency evacuation procedures
- act as the tournament Safeguarding lead (unless there is a specific safeguarding officer)
- on-the-day liaison with the venue staff and any physical/ environmental issues that may arise
- maintain safe access to gangways and fire exits
- make arrangements for 1st Aid provision
- arrange for the safe cleaning-up of any liquid and blood-spills
- ensure any TTE special safety measures, that may be in force from time to time, are managed
- submit results and participation monitoring data to TTE



10. Development Activity

The following guidance outlines an approach to support light-touch grassroots engagement/ development activity which uses the format of a competition in order to bring new people into table tennis, and sits across a wide geographical area.

If an activity meets the following requirements then it would not comprise a regulated competition, and may be held freely by members and affiliated organisations across County boundaries:

Distinction

This **MUST** be clearly different to league/ county or nationally-regulated competitions, and by targeting the cohort of participants very clearly and specifically. Entrants can only comprise of the following:

- those new to table tennis
- club players with no current or former national ranking/rating within last 2 years
- local league players that have not previously played nationally regulated tournaments

Regulations

Not applicable; these are non-ranking and non-regulated (eg technical regs need not apply, and sanctions do not apply)

If necessary, the Tournament Approval Panel (TAP) will determine at its sole discretion whether a specific competition comprises a regulated competition.

Affiliation/ Membership

- It is strongly recommended that the lead entity (eg club) is affiliated to TTE, and hence has public liability insurance
- It is strongly recommended that all participants have a minimum of TTE 'Club Play' Membership (free of charge; includes insurance and adherence to TTE policies)

Approval

None is needed – however, hosts are encouraged to check with all counties in the area out of courtesy and so as not to create any risk of clashes with county activities

Safe & Effective Delivery

The organising group unavoidably takes responsibility for safe and effective delivery, and has duty of care for all participants.

- The organiser should manage all issues/ incidents/ accidents through their operational processes and procedures including welfare, safeguarding, security, 1st aid, and in the event of injury or emergency
- The organiser should produce their own risk assessments and implement appropriate controls as required. These should be specific to the venue, its equipment and facilities, the activity taking place, the age and standard of the participants, and also take into account any processes and requirements stipulated by the venue
- The organiser should hold such insurances as may be appropriate for the activity, such as public liability, and be able to evidence any current training/ certification indicated by risk assessment, such as safeguarding, 1st aid or DBS check

11. Application & Approval Process

The TTE national calendar is for TTE nationally authorised regulated competitions, including Open Tournaments

However this may at the discretion of the Tournament Approval Panel (TAP) also include other sizeable, notable, or non-regulated competitions for information. This would typically be determined on the following considerations:

- Size and reach of the competition
- Impact on TTE suppliers
- Potential impact on availability of Technical Officials

Table Tennis England is under no obligation to include (eg) closed or non-regulated activity on the TTE national calendar.

The TTE national calendar runs 01 August to 31 July, and is typically released for applications in the preceding Oct/ Nov (around 10-22 months in advance) When considering a tournament in the first instance, the Tournament Organiser should contact the Chairman of the Tournament Approval Panel (TAP) to obtain outline approval for the date of the tournament.



The TTE national calendars can be seen [here](#)

A number of considerations are taken into account when approving the date(s) of a tournament, as follows:

- 1.** Does the tournament clash with the dates of the Senior National Championships or a hosted WTT/ ITTF competition
- 2.** Some national competitions will retain priority over applications, eg. Tournament applications will not be accepted where they would represent a direct clash with a British Clubs League section. However, Tournament applications will still be considered where they target a different primary cohort – for instance, the U15 National Series will include only the top players in the U15 cohort, and therefore is unlikely to clash with a proposed U15 1* tournament on the same date
- 3.** Is the tournament within 50 miles of another tournament of similar status and age category – or in a nearby area in a similar timeframe that would detract from the other event

TAP endeavours to be as fair as possible when considering all date approval applications; this is not a 'precise science' and all applications are considered with a view to the possible negative impact on already approved tournaments, and upon that of an applicant tournament.

No tournament will be entered on the TTE National Calendar until a fully completed and approved OT1 Application Form has been submitted and approved.

Application & Approval process flowchart



12. Key Contacts

It is expected that communication referred to in this document will be by email.



General Enquiries: contact [Dave Cochrane](#) (Secretary, TAP Committee)

Tournament Dates: in the first instance contact [John Mackey](#) (Chairman, TAP Committee) for outline approval

OT1 Application Forms: send to [Gary Whyman](#) (TAP Committee)

Entry Forms for Approval: send to [Lyndon Griffiths](#) (TAP Committee)

OT3 Misconduct Reports: send to [John Stalker](#) (TAP Committee)

Levy payment and Ranking results: [Table Tennis England](#)

Complaints or Issues: [Neil Rogers](#), TTE Head of Competition & Events

12. Further Resources



Please visit the [Tournament Organiser](#) page for the following:

-  [Template forms](#) including OT1, OT3 & OT5
-  [Rules, guidance and advice](#)
-  [Tournament Stationery](#), including match cards for different singles and team match formats

All hosts and participants should please be aware of applicable Codes of Conduct, Safeguarding guidance and policies, which can be seen as follows:

-  [Information for Parents](#)
-  [Policies & Procedures](#)
-  [Safeguarding](#)
-  [Codes of Conduct and Streaming/ Photography/ Social Media use](#)

Please also see appendices for a Template Budget Planner and Entry Form Check List.

If you require assistance or guidance at any stage, please contact [Dave Cochrane](#) (Secretary, TAP Committee) or [John Mackey](#) (Chairman, TAP Committee)

Appendix A

| Template Budget Planner

The following template illustrates some income and expenditure lines for consideration in the planning and delivery of a tournament. This is offered for guidance only and is not exhaustive or definitive.

Income

Entry Fees

Refreshment sales

Sponsorship

Total Income

Expenditure

Venue

Equipment hire (eg tables/ barriers)

Equipment purchases (eg balls)

Refreshment supplies

Volunteer expenses

Official's expenses

Volunteer/ Official's refreshments

Trophies

Prize Fund

TTE Levy

Printing (eg match schedule or programme, wall charts)

Misc (eg player numbers, clipboards)

Contingency

Total Expenditure

Balance

Appendix B

| Entry Form Check List

A Items 1-53 must be on part of the form that can be retained by the entrant.

B Items 24-39 must be in the section headed "Regulations".

C Items 54-65 must be on the part of the form that the competitor sends in.

The exact wording must be used for all items marked *.

General (Items 1- 19)

- 1 Name of tournament
- 2 Tournament category: "4-Star", "2-Star", or "1-Star"
- 3* "The tournament is/is not included in the Computer Ranking Scheme." (delete as appropriate)
- 4 Promoting body
- 5 That the tournament is approved by TTE and, if the County Association is not the promoting body, by the appropriate County Association (if applicable)
- 6 Venue: Address, directions and telephone number (if any)
- 7 Referee: Name and qualification
- 8 Deputy Referee (4-Star only): Name and qualification
- 9 Tournament Organiser: Name, postal/email address and telephone number and, for 2-Star and above, qualification
- 10 Organising Committee: Names of members
- 11 Entry Forms: Name, postal/email address and telephone number of person from whom they are available
- 12 Date(s) on which tournament is to be played
- 13 Time(s) of start of play
- 14 Draw: Date on which it will be made
- 15 Admission charge to venue and whether any is payable by competitors
- 16 Admission charge, if any, to parents of Junior/Cadet competitors
- 17 "All entries and event details are subject to COVID-related restrictions, or protocols that Table Tennis England may deem necessary. Venues used for events may impose COVID restrictions that go beyond government guidance."
- 18 "All participants and attendees at Table Tennis England events are subject to Table Tennis England Codes of Conduct. See [here](#)"
- 19 "TTE, the Organisers and the Referee will not tolerate bad language or verbal abuse of volunteers, officials, staff or venue staff, nor a failure to follow the operational directions of stewards and event staff. We will treat all such instances extremely seriously and will take disciplinary action if necessary. For further details, please see the Table Tennis England [Workforce Protection Policy](#) "

Entry Provisions (Items 20-23)

- 20 Entries: Name and postal/email address of person to whom entry should be sent
- 21 Closing date for entries.
- 22* For all tournaments except 4-Star:
"If it becomes necessary to restrict entries, priority will be given in order of receipt."
For 4-Star:
"If it becomes necessary to restrict entries, priority will be given in order of receipt, except that all valid entries from the top 50 TTE ranked males and top 30 TTE ranked females in the event age-group will be accepted"
- 23* If applicable, "No entry will be accepted after the draw has been made."

Regulations Section (Items 24– 39)

- 24* For 1-star tournaments: "Every entrant must be affiliated as a Compete Member or provide proof of being a member of another National Association in membership of the ITTF in order to gain a reciprocal membership. An entrant who is not a TTE member or is affiliated as a Supporter or Club Play Member may alternately purchase a One-Off Tournament Pass at the time of entry via <https://tabletennisengland.sport80.com/> once this product is launched. It is not possible to obtain the OTTP at the tournament"
- 25* For 2-Star and above: "Every entrant must be affiliated as a Compete Plus Member or provide proof of being a member of another National Association affiliated to the ITTF and pay the appropriate fee in order to gain a reciprocal membership. An entrant who is not a TTE member or is affiliated as a Supporter or Club Play Member may alternately purchase a One-Off Tournament Pass at the time of entry via <https://tabletennisengland.sport80.com/> once this product is launched. An entrant only affiliated as a Compete member may enter the tournament upon payment of the appropriate One- Time Tournament Top-Up fee via <https://tabletennisengland.sport80.com/> It is not possible to obtain the OTTP or the OTTT at the tournament"
- 26* "TTE Regulations Part A (Regulated Competitions) and Part B (Tournament Regulations) apply to the tournament."
- 27* "ITTF Regulations for International Competitions apply to the tournament except where otherwise specified in TTE Regulations Parts A or B, or in this form."
- 28 If applicable, any further variations of ITTF Regulations
- 29* For 4-Star tournaments: "Players may/will/will not be expected to umpire group matches." (Delete as appropriate) [Additional details may be added here]
- 30* For 2-Star and 1-Star tournaments: either "No competitor will be obliged to umpire" or "All competitors may be required to umpire at least one match in each event entered" [Additional details may be added here]
31. Any tournament with a team event must clearly state which individuals are authorised to be present and to give advice at the playing area. It is recommended that this comprises –
- a. the players named on the match card for the match in question
 - b. up to one additional person per player.
- 32 System of play: Whether in groups and/or knockout
- 33 Number of games to be played in each match
- 34 Qualifying age(s) for players in any events having an age qualification
- 35 If applicable, eligibility for banded events
- 36 Players' Clothing:
- 1-Star: Main colour of clothing must be different from colour of ball
 - 2-Star & above: As specified in TTE Regulations Part A
 - 3.1 Playing clothing shall consist of a shirt and shorts, trousers, leggings or skirt, or a one-part sports outfit, socks and playing shoes; a sports hijab may also be worn. Other garments shall not be worn during play except with the permission of the referee.
 - 3.2 The main colour of a shirt, shorts, trousers or skirt, other than sleeves and collar of a shirt, shall be clearly different from that of the ball in use.
 - 3.3 Any markings or trimming on the front or side of a playing garment and objects such as jewellery worn by a player shall not be so conspicuous or brightly reflecting as to unsight an opponent.
- 37* "No competitor or official shall engage in betting on players or matches."
- 38* "Doping shall not take place either before or during play."
- 39* "Completion and submission of this Entry Form signifies agreement by the entrant to the conditions of the competition, including any variations of ITTF regulations."

Playing Conditions and Equipment (Items 40– 46)

- 40 Tables: make and number
- 41 Nets and posts: make and type
- 42 Balls: make/name, grade and colour of currently ITTF-approved balls to be used
- 43 Courts: Whether or not each table is in an individual court enclosed by surrounds
- Dimensions of court.
- Minimum height of playing area (floor to ceiling)

- Minimum height of lighting from floor
- 44 Lighting: Whether over each table or only general
Type (traditional, tungsten, fluorescent, quartz-halogen etc)
- 45 Floor: Type (wood, plastic, etc)
- 46 Score indicators:
- 2-Star and 4-Star tournaments: that they will be used for all matches
 - 1-Star tournaments: that they will be used for finals, and whether or not they will be used for all matches

Information Section (Items 47– 53)

- 47 That doping control tests may take place
- 48 Practice: Whether or not any separate practice facilities and, if so, how many tables and whether or not with same playing conditions as tournament
- 49 Changing facilities: Details, including whether or not hot showers are available
- 50 Car Parking: What facilities are available and whether free or at a charge
- 51 Catering: Details, including whether or not full meals are available
- 52 Prizes:
- Whether cash, vouchers, goods or trophies
 - To whom to be awarded (e.g. 'to all winners and runners-up')
 - Except where trophies only are awarded, a full list of prizes, showing the amount of each cash prize and the approximate value of each prize consisting of vouchers or goods
- 53 Photo/livestreaming
(Organisation name) may be taking photos and live streaming matches during this event which may include (but not limited to), using them in our printed and online platforms, social media, press releases and funding applications. If you do not give permission to take photographs and/or video of you (or individuals for whom you are legally responsible), please contact (organisation email) Please be aware that we follow the Table Tennis England's [Photo and live streaming Policy](#)

Entry Section (Items 54– 65) (Properly separable from portion containing obligatory information)

- 54 Events: Name of every event being run
Entry fees: Amount for each event
- 55 Player's Name (Block Capitals)
- 56 If not affiliated to TTE, name of National Association
Membership/Player Licence Number
- 57 County of Affiliation
- 58 Space for date of birth
- 59 Please detail any relevant disability, accessibility or health issues
- 60* Player's Undertaking: "I undertake to observe the regulations of the tournament, to abide by the decisions of the Referee, and to fulfil the schedule of play arranged for me unless prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond my control and accepted as such by the Referee."
- 61* Table Tennis England require consent to the use of personal data in the administration of this competition, in accordance with the [TTE Privacy Policy](#); the information will be shared where necessary with the organisers and event committee. For a player under 16 this consent must be given by a parent or guardian, who must also confirm agreement to the player's participation in the competition.
- 62* *If player is 16 or over:*
- Data Protection
- I am the player named above and I consent to the use by TTE of my personal data in the administration of this competition.
- Signed:
- Date:

63* If player is under 16:

Data Protection & Activity Consent

I have legal responsibility for the player named above and I consent to his/her participation in the competition, and to the use by TTE of his/her personal data in its administration.

Name: (block capitals)

Relationship to player:

Signed:

Date:

64* The UK Anti-Doping Rules apply to all persons entering an event or competition, for whichever is the longer of a) the length of their membership or licence period; or b) 12 months from the date of their participation, whether or not the entrant or licence holder is a citizen of, or resident in, the UK.

65* A player under 18 may not participate in a Table Tennis England event or competition unless a parent or guardian of that player has consented to testing of that player in the following form:

Anti-Doping Acknowledgment

I have legal responsibility for the player named above and I confirm that I have read the TTE Anti-Doping Regulations (Appendix P) and that I hereby acknowledge that the player is bound by these Regulations.

Name: (block capitals)

Relationship to player:

Signed:

Date