

Generic Rules

These rules relate to all ECB Non First Class Competitions for Men and Boys unless otherwise indicated.

1 Management

- 1.1 The control of the Competition shall be undertaken by the ECB Recreational Cricket Group (RCG) and all decisions relating to these rules or to matches played in the Competition shall be final and binding on all concerned.
- 1.2 The ECB and RCG may delegate any of their powers and duties.

2 Entry

- 2.1 Entry into any of ECB's County Competitions shall be open to those County Boards recognised by the ECB.
- 2.2 Counties who participated in the previous year's Competition shall automatically be included for the following season unless written notification to the contrary is given by 1st October in the year prior to the Competition. A County wishing to enter or be re-admitted to a Competition must give written notice to that effect to the ECB Cricket Department by 1st October in the year prior to the Competition.
- 2.3 All Clubs entering an ECB Competition must be affiliated through their County Cricket Board.

3 Qualification of Players (Men and Boys)

3.1 Regulations Governing the Qualification of Cricketers for England

Subject to the overriding discretion of the ECB, acting with the consent of the International Cricket Council, a Cricketer will only be qualified to play for England in a Test Match or in a One Day International Match if:

- (a) he is either a British citizen or an Irish citizen; and

- (b1) he was born within England and Wales; or
- (b2) he has been resident in England and Wales for the immediately preceding four consecutive years; and
- (c) he has not during the immediately preceding four consecutive years either (i) played cricket for any Full Member Country outside the EEA at U17 level or above, or (ii) played First Class Cricket in any such Full Member Country except as an overseas cricketer under local rules similar to Regulation 3 (Unqualified Cricketers) of the ECB Regulations Governing the Qualification and Registration of Cricketers, or in any other circumstances approved by the ECB; and
- (d) he makes, whenever requested by the ECB, a declaration in the form set out in Annex B to the ECB Regulations defining Qualification for England.
- (e) In the case of a Cricketer seeking to become qualified under (b2) above he will (until he has become qualified to play for England) only be treated as having been resident within England and Wales for the relevant consecutive period if he has spent a minimum of 210 days in each year within England and Wales (for which purpose "year" shall mean a year ending 1st April).

3.2 Regulations governing the Qualification of Cricketers for Competitive County Cricket
Subject to the overriding discretion of the ECB and subject as provided below, a Cricketer will only be qualified to play in a Competitive County Cricket match (a Qualified Cricketer) if:

- (a) he is a European Economic Area (EEA) national (other than a Bulgarian and Romanian national), a national of Bulgaria and Romania who is able to exercise a treaty right as a worker in the United Kingdom without restriction or a national of a state which is a party to an agreement with the EU and its member states providing that their nationals lawfully employed within the EEA shall have employment rights equal to those of EEA nationals; and

- (b) he has not, within the 12 months leading up to April 1st immediately before the season in question, or at any time subsequently before applying for and being granted his registration with his country either played cricket for any Full Member Country outside the EEA at U17 level or above, or played First Class Cricket in any such Full Member Country except as an overseas cricketer under local rules similar to ECB Regulation 3 (Unqualified Cricketers), or in any other circumstances approved by the ECB.
- (c) he makes, whenever requested by the ECB, a declaration in the form set out in Annex A to the ECB Regulations Governing the Qualification and Registration of Cricketers.

3.3 Definitions

3.3.1 **Competitive County Cricket** refers to matches played in the course of:

- (a) The LV County Championship
- (b) The Friends Provident Trophy, the NatWest Pro40 League and the Twenty20 Cup
- (c) The Under 17 County Championship
- (d) Any other similar competition authorised by and designated as Competitive County Cricket by the ECB.

3.3.2 **Qualification to play for England** refers to matches played in the course of:

- (a) The Minor Counties Championship.

3.3.3 England and Wales means England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

3.3.4 The **EEA** means the European Economic Area and includes each of its member states as from time to time applicable. Currently the EEA comprises the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Norway,

Liechtenstein, Iceland, Cyprus (Greek part), Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania and includes each of its member states as from time to time applicable.

3.3.5 **Residing and resident** mean the occupation of a bona fide home (i.e. the only or main home of the Cricketer concerned) and the acquisition of temporary accommodation during the season may not fulfil this requirement.

3.3.6 **Full Member Country** means a country which is a full member of the International Cricket Council.

3.4 Qualification Criteria for Junior Cricketers (Boys and Girls)

The qualification criteria for all County Representative cricket for the Under 17 age group and below is as follows:

3.4.1 A player may only represent one County in any one Competition in any one season.

3.4.2 A player shall be eligible to play for a County provided:-

- i) The player is resident within, or was born within, that County.
- ii) Alternatively, the player is attending an educational establishment within that County.
- iii) Alternatively, the player has been a bona-fide playing member of a club within that County for at least the entire preceding season including playing in representative matches for that club.

3.4.3 County boundaries shall be as defined by ECB Cricketing County Boundaries as currently agreed.

3.4.4 A player may play for a County for whom the player is not qualified only if the player has not been selected by the County/Countries for whom the player is otherwise qualified and has obtained the written consent of that

County/those Counties. Such consent shall not be unreasonably withheld. There is no requirement to obtain the consent of the County of birth. In the event of a dispute the matter shall be referred to the ECB, whose decision shall be final.

- 3.4.5 A player who has played for a County, with a valid qualification for that County, during a season can continue to play for that County, if selected, the following season even if the player no longer has a current qualification (for example following a change of school).

The qualification remains valid from season to season, but lapses if the player does not represent the County during a season.

- 3.4.6 Age groups are defined by the player's age at midnight on 31 August in the year prior to the relevant season.

3.5 Points of Clarification

The following points are intended to answer some of the more frequently asked questions relating to the qualification criteria:

- 3.5.1 The "entire preceding season" membership requirement means that club membership during the current season does not count and players must have become a bona fide member of the club no later than 1st May during the preceding season.
- 3.5.2 Playing membership of a club includes membership of a Kwik Cricket or 'Junior Colts' section if the club has one, and includes match play against other clubs.
- 3.5.3 Qualification by birth is excluded from the 'consent' arrangements for the sake of simplicity.
- 3.5.4 Players who have multiple qualifications are free to select the County that they wish to represent. Once that selection is made it remains in force for that season, but can be changed in subsequent seasons, without requiring consent, provided that the player still has a valid qualification for the newly selected County and notifies the player's former County in writing.

- 3.5.5 A player who is registered and contracted to a First Class County (FCC) is eligible to play for the appropriate age group sides of that County. FCC's wishing to register and contract a player not otherwise qualified for that County should seek the consent of the other County/Counties involved. Such consent should not be unreasonably withheld. Registering and contracting a player does not override the restriction on playing for only one County in any one Competition in a season, so that if a player has played, as an example, for a Non First Class County's Under 17 side and subsequently signs for a FCC he cannot play in the FCC's Under 17 team that season but could play for their Under 19 team if they run one.
- 3.5.6 The position of First Class County Academies was raised and discussed by the ECB Schools, Junior and Youth Group in October 2003. It was generally accepted that Academy Directors should have responsibility for the cricketers in their charge, where they play and up to a point when they bowled and where they batted. Players joining a First Class Academy would not automatically qualify for that County. The Academy Director should draw up and agree a playing programme to meet the needs of the player, which might involve him continuing to play for his Minor County or might mean a transfer to the First Class County (as already allowed in the case of contracted players) or a combination of both. The existing regulations preventing a player from playing for more than one County in a specific Competition during the season remain in force. It was agreed that good communication between Counties, based on the best interests of the player, was the key.
- 3.5.7 Club membership during the preceding season will qualify a player to play only for the County in which the club is physically located (as per the ECB Cricketing County Boundaries as currently defined). Membership of a League that crosses County boundaries, affiliation to more than one County Board or participation in the Colts structure of another County will not alter the primary affiliation of the club to the County in which it is located

and therefore the County qualification based on club membership of its players.

All disputes relating to these qualification criteria should be addressed to the ECB Cricket Department.

3.6 Club Qualifications (Men)

- 3.6.1 A cricketer shall only be eligible to play for a club in an ECB club Competition if he is a bona-fide, fully paid-up member of that club.
- 3.6.2 If a club is a member of a League, a cricketer shall be deemed to be a bona-fide member of that club if he is eligible to play for that club under the rules of that League.
- 3.6.3 A cricketer shall only be eligible to play in an ECB club Competition for one club in any one season.
- 3.6.4 A cricketer shall not be eligible to play in an ECB club Competition if he receives remuneration for playing cricket and that remuneration is his main source of income (unless covered by 3.6.5.1)
- 3.6.5 A cricketer who is registered and contracted to a First Class County Club shall be ineligible to play in an ECB club Competition unless covered by 3.6.5.1.
- 3.6.5.1 Bona fide club members who are also registered and contracted with a First Class County can play provided they are uncapped, under 23 as at 30th September in the year prior to the season of the Competition and have not played for their County during the current season in the LV County Championship, Twenty20 Cup, Friends Provident Trophy or NatWest Pro40 League at the time of the match. If any club fields an ineligible player, they will be disqualified.
- 3.6.6 A cricketer whose registration and contract to a First Class County Club is cancelled after 1st April may not play in an ECB club Competition until the following season unless covered by 3.6.5.1.

3.6.7 A cricketer shall only be qualified to play in an ECB club Competition if he is qualified to play in a Competitive County Cricket Match or is registered under the provisions of 3.6.8 below as an overseas player resident in England.

3.6.8 Overseas Players Resident in England

A cricketer who is not qualified under 3.6.7 above, but who is ordinarily resident in this country can qualify as an overseas player resident in England and play in ECB club Competitions only if:

he has been resident in this country for a period of two years before the date of his request for registration.

he has not been out of this country for longer than 35 days consecutively or 70 days in total during the previous two years.

any remuneration he receives from playing cricket is not the main source of his income.

The definition of 'ordinarily resident' shall be in the absolute discretion of the body responsible for registration of the player in the relevant Competition.

Any such player MUST be properly registered with their ECB accredited Premier League or, if the club does not play in an ECB accredited Premier League, the player MUST be registered directly with the ECB Cricket Department, having completed an ECB 'Category 3 - Overseas Player' registration form. The club MUST have received the appropriate paperwork either from the League they participate in or the ECB Cricket Department showing that the player is registered PRIOR to the start of the match. No player shall be registered after 30th June in any season.

A player, who has a home in this country and has been granted "Exempt" status, who subsequently accepts a temporary work assignment, not related to cricket, in another country may apply to re-instate his previous "Exempt" status immediately on his return to this country. Approval is at the discretion of the registration body and is not automatic.

4 Cricket Balls

The Home side shall provide two new cricket balls for each match when balls are not provided by the ECB. The balls shall be of the standard laid down by the ECB for each Competition and shall be given to the umpires prior to the commencement of the match. The Home side will also be responsible for supplying enough spare balls of equal standard. A new ball must be used at the start of each innings.

5 Umpires

- 5.1 Each club side shall appoint one Member of the ECB Association of Cricket Officials (ECB ACO), who has received CRB clearance, in each match unless the umpires are appointed by the ECB or the County Board. The umpires shall be appointed for the whole match and may not play in the match.
- 5.2 Counties shall appoint two umpires who shall be Full Members of the ECB Association of Cricket Officials (ECB ACO) and also have CRB clearance for each home match they play.
- 5.3 Where umpires are appointed by the ECB, both counties or clubs must complete and sign an ECB Report on Reserve List/Local Umpires form or other ECB-supplied form and return it to the ECB Cricket Department after each match.

6 Scorers

Each team shall provide their own competent, non-playing scorer in all matches. If a team fails to provide a scorer a player has to be nominated from the team to take up the duty for the entire duration of the match.

7 Age Group Definition

Age Groups are based on the age of the player at midnight on 31st August in the year preceding the current season.

8 Team Sheets

Each side must provide the umpires with a team sheet before the start of the match identifying any player who has not reached the age of 18 on the date of the match and showing the specific age group of any player who is in the Under 19 age group or younger. It is recommended that the ECB Team Sheet card (available from the ECB Cricket Department) is used whenever possible.

9 Helmets and Faceguards

Any player under the age of 18 playing in any ECB Competition must wear a helmet with a faceguard when batting and either a helmet with a faceguard or a faceguard when standing up to the stumps when keeping wicket against a hard ball.

10 Match Results

It is the responsibility of the HOME side to enter the result and full scorecard details onto the appropriate site on play-cricket.com within 48 hours of the match being completed. The AWAY side should confirm that the summary result has been correctly entered within the next 24 hours. Both sides must ensure that their squad details have been entered into play-cricket.com prior to each match they play.

11 Code of Conduct

All players, team officials, club supporters and umpires shall be bound by the MCC Spirit of Cricket and the ECB Code of Conduct.

12 Coaching

Coaching shall not be permitted from the sidelines during a match. In such an event, the umpire shall request the coach/manager/parent/spectator to stop. If this persists, the umpire shall have the power to warn the offending team captain and manager that the matter will be reported to the County Board/ECB.

13 Disputes

Any dispute arising from the application or interpretation of the Rules and Playing Conditions shall be referred to the ECB. Any decision of the ECB shall be final and binding on the parties concerned.

Playing Conditions

1 Number of Overs per Bowler

- 1.1 Unless otherwise specified in the Playing Conditions for a specific Competition no bowler may bowl more than one-fifth of the amount of overs scheduled for the innings. However, in a delayed start, or interrupted match, where the overs are reduced for both sides, or for the side bowling second, no bowler may bowl more than one-fifth of the total overs allowed (unless such a number has been exceeded before the interruption), except that where the total overs are not divisible by five, an additional over shall be allowed to the minimum number of bowlers necessary to make up the balance - e.g. after 16 overs, rain interrupts play and the innings is reduced to 32 overs. Both opening bowlers have bowled 8 overs. Two bowlers can bowl 7 overs and three bowlers can bowl 6 overs. Bowlers 1 and 2 have already exceeded this limit. They count as the two bowlers who were allowed the extra over (7 as opposed to 6) and so any other bowlers are limited to 6 overs.
- 1.2 When an interruption occurs mid-over and on resumption the bowler has exceeded the new maximum allocation, he will be allowed to finish the incomplete over.
- 1.3 In the event of a bowler breaking down and being unable to complete an over, another bowler will bowl the remaining balls. Such part of an over will count as a full over only in so far as each bowler's limit is concerned.
- 1.4 Where possible, the number of overs bowled by each individual bowler shall be indicated on the scoreboard, from the commencement of an innings.
- 1.5 The allocation of overs per bowler will not be reduced as a result of the deduction of any penalty overs.

2 ECB Fast Bowling

The ECB Fast Bowling Directives will apply to all matches in all ECB Competitions subject to 2.1 below.

Age	Maximum overs per spell	Maximum overs per day
Up to U13	4 overs per spell	8 overs per day
U14, U15	5 overs per spell	10 overs per day
U16, U17	6 overs per spell	18 overs per day
U18, U19	7 overs per spell	21 overs per day

*For the purposes of these Directives a fast bowler is defined as a bowler to whom a wicket keeper in the same age group would in **normal circumstances** stand back to take the ball.*

Team Managers and/or Captains are responsible for providing the umpires with a team sheet showing the ages of any player who is aged Under 19 or below before the toss for innings takes place.

Umpires are requested to ensure that this Playing Condition is strictly adhered to in all circumstances.

- 2.1 In matches of 20 overs or less per team where the competition regulations only allow bowlers to bowl less than or equal to the number of overs specified as the maximum in a spell in the Directives the provisions requiring an equivalent number of overs from the same end to have elapsed before a subsequent spell can commence shall not apply (e.g. in any age group competition where a maximum of 4 overs per bowler is allowed these may be bowled at any time in the innings irrespective of the number of spells bowled).

3 Restrictions on the Placement of Fielders - without Inner Circles

- 3.1 Two semi-circles shall be drawn on the field of play. The semi-circles shall have as their centre the middle stump at either end of the pitch. The radius of each of the semi-circles shall be 30 yards (27.4 metres). The ends of each semi-circle shall be joined to the other by a straight line drawn on the field on the same side of the pitch. The field restriction area should be marked by painted white 'dots' at five-yard intervals, each 'dot' to be covered by a white plastic or rubber (but not metal) disc measuring seven inches in diameter.
- 3.2 At the instant of delivery, there may not be more than five fielders on the leg side.
- 3.3 For the duration of the innings only five fielders are permitted to be outside the field restriction marking at the instant of delivery.
- 3.4 In the event of an infringement of the above fielding restrictions, the umpire at the striker's end shall call and signal 'No Ball'.

4 Restrictions on the Placement of Fielders - with Inner Circles

- 4.1 Two semi-circles shall be drawn on the field of play.

The semi-circles shall have as their centre the middle stump at either end of the pitch. The radius of each of the semi-circles shall be 30 yards (27.4 metres). The ends of each semi-circle shall be joined to the other by a straight line drawn on the field on the same side of the pitch.

The field restriction area should be marked by painted white 'dots' at five-yard intervals, each 'dot' to be covered by a white plastic or rubber (but not metal) disc measuring seven inches in diameter.

- 4.2 At the instant of delivery, there may not be more than five fielders on the leg side.
- 4.3 For the first 15 overs of each innings only two fielders are permitted to be outside the field restriction marking at the instant of delivery.
- 4.4 For the remaining overs of each innings only five fielders are permitted to be outside the field restriction marking at the instant of delivery.
- 4.5 Two inner circles shall be drawn on the field of the play. The circles shall have as their centres the centre point of the popping crease at either end of the pitch. The radius of each of the circles is 15 yards (13.72 metres). The field restriction area should be marked by 'dots'.

The segment of the circles reserved for the slip positions shall not be demarcated (the final mark of the 15 yards radius shall be on a line placed at an angle of 45 degrees, measured from the popping crease at a point level with the middle stump). In the first 15 overs there must be a minimum of two stationary fielders within the 15-yard field restriction of the striker at the instant of delivery. When a fast bowler is bowling the two stationary fielders may be permitted to stand deeper than 15 yards (in the un-demarcated area) provided only that they are standing in slip, leg slip or gully positions.

- 4.6 In circumstances where the number of overs for the team batting first is reduced, the number of overs in regard to the restrictions in 4.3. and 4.5. above shall be reduced proportionately in a ratio of 15:45 or 15:50 in accordance with the table below. Fractions are to be ignored in all calculations regarding the number of overs.

Number of overs for which fielding restrictions in 4.3. and 4.5. above will apply:

45 overs a side		50 overs a side	
Total overs in innings	Overs for which restrictions apply	Total overs in innings	Overs for which restrictions apply
10 - 11	3	10 - 13	3
12 - 14	4	14 - 16	4
15 - 17	5	17 - 19	5
18 - 20	6	20 - 23	6
21 - 23	7	24 - 26	7
24 - 26	8	27 - 29	8
27 - 29	9	30 - 33	9
30 - 32	10	34 - 36	10
33 - 35	11	37 - 39	11
36 - 38	12	40 - 43	12
39 - 41	13	44 - 46	13
42 - 44	14	47 - 49	14
45	15	50	15

Where the number of overs for the team batting second is reduced, the aim will be to maintain the restrictions in 4.3 and 4.5. for the same proportion of the second innings that they were maintained for the first innings (fractions to be ignored).

- 4.7 In the event of an infringement of any of the above fielding restrictions, the umpire at the striker's end shall call and signal 'No Ball'.

5 Junior Fielding Restrictions

- 5.1 No young player in the Under 15 age group or younger shall be allowed to field closer than 8 yards (7.3 metres) from the middle stump, except behind the wicket on the off side, until the batsman has played at the ball. A fielder shall be allowed to move into the restricted area to make a catch or field the ball provided that they were outside the area when the stroke was made.

- 5.2 For players in the Under 13 age group and below the distance is 11 yards (10 metres).
- 5.3 These minimum distances apply even if the player is wearing a helmet.
- 5.4 Should a young player in these age groups come within the restricted distance the umpire must stop the game immediately and instruct the fielder to move back.
- 5.5 In addition any young player in the Under 16 to Under 18 age groups, who has not reached the age of 18, must wear a helmet when fielding within 6 yards (5.5 metres) of the bat, except behind the wicket on the off side. Players should wear appropriate protective equipment whenever they are fielding in a position where they feel at risk.

6 Law 14 - Declarations

Unless otherwise indicated, Law 14 will not apply in the Competition. The captain of the batting side may not declare the innings closed at any time during the course of the match.

7 Law 25 - Wide Ball - Judging a Wide

In addition to Law 25 the following will apply:

Umpires are instructed to apply a very strict and consistent interpretation in regard to this Law in order to prevent negative bowling wide of the wicket.

Any offside or legside delivery which in the opinion of the umpire does not give the batsman a reasonable opportunity to score shall be called a wide. For guidance purposes, in adult cricket a legside wide should be called if a ball passes on the legside outside the pads of the batsman standing in a normal guard position.

8 Wicket-Keeping Gloves

Law 40.2 will apply in all ECB Competitions.

9 Bowl-Outs

- 9.1 In the event of no result being obtained by other methods and where there is no reserve date on which to play the game, a bowl-out (outdoors or indoors) will take place to achieve a result. Five players from each side will bowl two overarm deliveries each at a wicket (conforming to Law 8) from a wicket pitched at a distance of 22 yards (or the length of pitch applicable in the Competition) with, if practicable, bowling, popping and return creases marked (conforming to Law 9). The side, which bowls down the wicket (as defined in Law 28.1a) the most times, shall be the winner. If the scores are equal, the same players will bowl one ball each alternately to achieve a result on a 'sudden death' basis.

The following shall also apply in respect of bowl-outs:

- 9.1.1 The same suitably acceptable ball (not a new one) will be used by both teams. If this ball becomes wet, it may be changed subject to the umpires' approval.
- 9.1.2 If a bowler bowls a No ball it will count as one of the two deliveries but will not count towards the score of the team.
- 9.1.3 If the original match has started, then the five cricketers nominated to take part in the bowl-out must be chosen from the eleven cricketers and 12th man selected to play in the match. If there has been no play in the original match (the toss has not taken place), the five cricketers may be selected from any of the players in the squad as registered on Play-Cricket.
- 9.1.4 Each side will appoint a wicket-keeper to stand behind the wicket but out of reach of the stumps.

10 Net Run-Rate

A team's net run rate is calculated by deducting from the average runs per over scored by that team, the average runs per over scored against that team. The calculation of average runs shall be total runs scored x 100 divided by legitimate balls received. In the event of a team being all out in less than its full quota of overs, the calculation of the net run rate of both teams shall be based on the full quota of overs to which the batting team would have been entitled and not the number of overs in which the team was dismissed.

Only those matches where results are achieved will count for the purpose of net run rate calculations.

11 Average Run Rate

A team's average run rate is calculated by dividing the number of runs scored in its innings by the number of legitimate balls received during that innings. In the case of the team batting first being dismissed in less than the number of overs allocated for their innings, the calculation will be based on the number of balls that the team was scheduled to receive and not on the number actually received. In the case of the team batting second being unable to receive their allocated overs, the calculation of their average run rate will be based on the actual number of legitimate deliveries received by them during their innings. The average run rate can be calculated to any number of decimal positions and a tie can only be achieved if the average run rates are identical.

12 Boundaries

It is recommended that, other than in exceptional circumstances, the size of the boundary, measured from the middle of the pitch being used in the match, shall conform to the following dimensions:

	Minimum	Maximum
All Adult matches	55m (60 yds)	70m (77 yds)
Under 17	50m (55 yds)	70m (77 yds)
Under 15	35m (38 yds)	65m (71 yds)
Under 13	30m (33 yds)	55m (60 yds)

13 Scoreboard

In all competition matches it shall be the responsibility of the batting side to ascertain the details of the score, wickets and overs from the scorers and to see that the scoreboard is brought up to date with this information at least at the end of every over – assuming that no official means of updating the scoreboard is in place.