

2026 Australian Cross Country Championships

Technical Regulations



The Australian Cross Country Championships incorporate the Australian All Schools Cross Country Championships, Australian Masters Cross Country Championships and UniSport Cross Country Championships.

Date: Saturday 22 August 2026

Venue: Victoria Park, Ballarat, Victoria

Australian Athletics welcomes all participants in the 2026 Australian Cross Country Championships. It is important that all participating athletes, and where relevant coaches and para-guides/support personnel, take the time to read and adhere to the rules and regulations below, to allow smooth conduct of the Championships.

These Championships will be conducted according to the rules of World Athletics, World Para Athletics, and Australian Athletics (and where applicable to Australian Masters Athletics and UniSport Australia).

1 ATHLETE CHECK-IN

- 1.1 All athletes (except UniSport) are required to check in for their event with their Team Manager. **All Team Managers are expected to be at the venue from 12:00noon until 5:00pm on Friday 21 August during the course inspection for the distribution of bibs.**
- 1.2 Athletes in the Masters age groups should collect their bibs from the Masters Team Manager
- 1.3 UniSport athletes (where not also representing a state) competition will collect bibs and check in at the Technical Information Centre.

2 SCRATCHING FROM AN EVENT

- 2.1 If an athlete fails to participate in an event after confirmation by the Team Manager, they will be shown in the results as DNS. If an athlete wants to scratch prior to a race this can be done at the TIC by the athlete or Team Manager.

3 UNIFORMS

- 3.1 **Open athletes** - Athletes are encouraged to wear their Member Association, or First Claim Club uniform.
- 3.2 **Underage athletes** - All underage athletes who are part of their state team must wear their approved Member Association uniform. Where athletes are not part of the state team, athletes should wear the uniform of their First Claim Club.
- 3.3 All uniforms must comply with the Australian Athletics uniform regulations (available at <https://www.athletics.com.au/resources/?search=uniform>).
- 3.4 Particular attention is drawn to the Nike Pro and similar instances with other manufacturers, where oversize branding around the top bands of lower body garments is prevalent. Athletes will not be permitted to compete in those items which do not comply with the advertising regulations. Taping or the turning down of such non-compliant items will not be allowed. To avoid stress on arrival at the Call Room athletes are asked to ensure that they are not wearing these garments for on-field warm-up or competition purposes.

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4 ATHLETE BIBS

- 4.1 Athletes will receive one bib only, displaying the athlete's name and number. The bib must be worn on the front of the uniform firmly attached with no less than four (4) pins. The entire bib including sponsorship information must be always visible and no part of the bib shall be folded under the uniform.
- 4.2 All athlete bibs are to be collected from their team manager, except UniSport entered athletes who can collect their bibs from TIC. (UniSport athletes entered by a Member Association will get their bib from their State team manager). If an athlete loses their bib, the team manager will need to collect a new athlete bib from the TIC. The cost of a new athlete bib will be \$20.
- 4.3 AUSTRALIAN ATHLETICS WILL ENFORCE WORLD ATHLETICS RULE TR 5.9 & TR 5.11, WHICH RENDER AN ATHLETE LIABLE TO DISQUALIFICATION IF S/HE TAMPERS IN ANY WAY THE COMPETITION BIB.

5 AGE GROUPS

- 5.1 Athletes MUST turn 10 in the year of competition to compete in these Championships. Athletes can only participate in a single age group.
- 5.2 Athlete age restrictions

Age Group	Restriction
Under 11	athletes born in 2016
Under 12	athletes born in 2015
Under 13	athletes born in 2014
Under 14	athletes born in 2013
Under 15	athletes born in 2012
Under 16	athletes born in 2011
Under 17	athletes born in 2010
Under 18	athletes born in 2009
Under 20	athletes born in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Open	athletes must be turning 16 years of age (born before 2011). There is no upper limit on age but athletes must be able to meet the cut-off time.
Under 23	athletes must be born in 2004, 2005 or 2006 and will enter and compete in the Open age division
Para U13	athletes born in 2014, 2015, 2016
Para U15	athletes born in 2012 or 2013
Para U17	athletes born in 2010 or 2011
Para U20	athletes born in 2007, 2008, 2009
Para Open	athletes born in 2006 and earlier.
Masters	athletes 30yrs + on the first day of competition (22 August 2026)

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6 ENTRIES / TEAMS

- 6.1 Athletes must be registered members of a Member Association of Australian Athletics, be eligible under World Athletics rules to represent a member country of World Athletics, a member of a Masters Athletics State Association OR a bona fide School Student – attending a school or registered for home schooling within the jurisdiction of the Member Association. An athlete who is a currently registered member of a Member Association, but who attends school in another state/territory shall compete for their Member Association.
- 6.2 Athletes competing for their university only do not have to be registered members of a Member Association but must meet all eligibility requirements set by UniSport Australia.
- 6.3 Except for athletes competing for their University and Masters athletes, all other athletes should have competed at least once in a competition sanctioned and conducted by a Member Association since 1 January 2025. (as selectors, Member Associations may apply discretion to this regulation – based on injury, illness, or geographical isolation etc.).
- 6.4 There is no restriction on the numbers of athletes that may be entered in any event from the Under 11 through to Open aged events (able bodied or para), however all athletes representing a state must be selected or approved by their Member Association. Athletes may only enter one age group which strictly follows the year of birth (except for open and Under 20 competition).
- 6.5 Each Member Association will nominate their 'Official Team Members' from registered club members or bona fide school students who will wear state/territory uniforms – a minimum of four athletes up to a maximum of twelve athletes. The first four athletes across the line in the open event, and the first three athletes across the line in the underage events (U11-U20) count towards the Team Championships. These teams are nominated as part of the entry process.
- 6.6 For Para competition there must be at least three teams confirmed for an age group for a separate Teams Championship event to be conducted and medals awarded. Two athletes per team will score, and if there is a third athlete (and they finish) they will also receive a medal.
- 6.7 Para Classifications accepted are T01, T11 – T13, T20, T35-T38, T44-T46. Please note the minimum entry standards before entering.
- 6.8 Entries close on the 4 August 2026 at 12:00noon with Australian Athletics and the entry fee is \$55 (incl GST). All Under 11 – Open entries must be submitted by the Member Associations, Masters entries submitted by Australian Masters Athletics and University entries by UniSport Australia or Member Associations (if participating in both competitions).

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7 CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS (and National Cut-Off Times)

Age Group	Distance	National cut-off time	Individual	Team	Athletes to score in a team
Men Open	10km	40 minutes	✓	✓	4
Women Open	10km	42 minutes	✓	✓	4
Men Under 20	8km	32 minutes	✓	✓	3
Women Under 20	6km	25 minutes	✓	✓	3
Men Under 18	6km	25 minutes	✓	✓	3
Women Under 18	4km	20 minutes	✓	✓	3
Men Under 17	6km	25 minutes	✓	✓	3
Women Under 17	4km	20 minutes	✓	✓	3
Men Under 16	4km	20 minutes	✓	✓	3
Women Under 16	4km	20 minutes	✓	✓	3
Men Under 15	4km	20 minutes	✓	✓	3
Women Under 15	4km	20 minutes	✓	✓	3
Boys Under 14	3km	15 minutes	✓	✓	3
Girls Under 14	3km	15 minutes	✓	✓	3
Boys Under 13	3km	15 minutes	✓	✓	3
Girls Under 13	3km	15 minutes	✓	✓	3
Boys Under 12	3km	15 minutes	✓	✓	3
Girls Under 12	3km	15 minutes	✓	✓	3
Boys Under 11	2km	10 minutes	✓	✓	3
Girls Under 11	2km	10 minutes	✓	✓	3
Masters Men (5yr age groups from 30yrs up to 75+)	4km	36 minutes	✓		
Masters Women (5yr age groups from 30yrs up to 75+)	4km	36 minutes	✓		
Para Men Open	3km	20 minutes	✓	✓	2
Para Women Open	3km	22 minutes	✓	✓	2
Para Men Under 20	3km	20 minutes	✓	✓	2
Para Women Under 20	3km	22 minutes	✓	✓	2
Para Men Under 17	3km	20 minutes	✓	✓	2
Para Women Under 17	3km	22 minutes	✓	✓	2
Para Men Under 15	3km	20 minutes	✓	✓	2
Para Women Under 15	3km	22 minutes	✓	✓	2
Para Boys Under 13	2km	20 minutes	✓	✓	2
Para Girls Under 13	2km	20 minutes	✓	✓	2

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8 PARA ATHLETICS

8.1 Classification

All para-athlete entries must have a current provisional or full National Level Classification or higher to qualify for entry into an Australian Athletics event. If the Athlete's National Classification (or higher) is past its review date, entry will be at the discretion of Australian Athletics.

8.2 Baseline Performances

Baseline provides a simplified way for athletes, administrators, and coaches to compare performances in multi-class events across all athletes with an eligible classification. Baselines used for cross-country are available online (Australian Athletics website).

8.3 Deaf Athletes

No special provisions shall be applied for deaf athletes in cross country events.

8.4 Guides

Cross country is not recognised by World Para Athletics and therefore is not covered by the WPA Rules. Australian Athletics has determined that for the purposes of guides, the road running rules should be applied and treat both as Out of Stadium (OOS).

All athletes in the T11 classification run with a guide, T12 athletes have the option to use a guide. There is no requirement to wear eye masks. Guide runners are to be tethered to their athletes in accordance with WPA Rule 6.15. Guide runners are to wear a high visibility vest. Vests will be available from the Call Room and should be returned at the finish line to the Post Event Control Officials. Athletes need to supply their own tether.

No other classifications are permitted to use guides as per WPA rules.

9 ACCREDITATION

9.1 There will be no Accreditation procedures or cards for this competition.

10 GATE ENTRY

10.1 There is no gate charge or venue entry procedure for this competition.

11 TIMETABLE CHANGES

11.1 The timetable and any changes in the timetable or these regulations are available on the Australian Athletics website.

12 TECHNICAL MEETING

12.1 The Technical Delegate will be available for questions or clarifications as needed but there will not be any formal Technical Meeting.

13 WARM-UP, TRAINING AND COURSE INSPECTION

13.1 A course inspection is available on Friday 21 August from 12:00noon to 5:00pm and is the only opportunity for such inspection. The course will not be available before or after this time. The course will be otherwise closed and not available for warm up.

13.2 Warmup is not permitted on the course or in any other area that has been signed and/or marked as 'no warmup.' Athletes must comply with all instructions and directions given by Officials.

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14 SHOES

- 14.1 Athletes may compete either barefoot, spikes or shoes. Spikes can be needles, Christmas Trees (or new variations of this type), or Pyramid shape. 9mm is recommended for this course. If the weather is extremely wet prior to the Championships, then 12-15mm spikes are recommended.
- 14.2 There are no shoe regulations in place for this competition.

15 CALL ROOM PROCEDURES

- 15.1 There will be a Call Room in operation. All athletes are required to report to the Call Room before their event.
- 15.2 Final entry time to the Call Room is 20 minutes before the scheduled starting time of the event in the final Timetable.
- 15.3 Athletes must report to the Call Room on time with their athlete bib attached as above.
- 15.4 In the Call Room, athletes will be expected to demonstrate that their competition uniform and bibs, shoes and other equipment comply with the competition rules. Uniform checks, including for non-conforming advertising will be made.
- 15.5 Athletes will leave the Call Room ready to run. Competition management may allow athletes to take warm clothing to the start line (if conditions warrant). This will be advised the day prior. If conditions warrant a change on the day, then the Call Room will advise the athletes. Athletes wishing to wear tracksuits or other garments after they leave the Call Room should plan with team managers to collect these items from the athletes at the start line. No goods will be collected or stored in the Call Room.
- 15.6 Athletes will proceed from the Call Room to the assembly area adjacent to the start line 5 minutes prior to the advertised start time of their event accompanied by a Call Room Judge or Starter's Assistant. Athletes who proceed to the event not accompanied by an official may not be allowed to start.
- 15.7 This time allows for marshalling and movement to the competition site. The remainder of the time may be used to complete warm-up in the Start Area. Warm-ups are only to be conducted under the supervision of officials.
- 15.8 There will be 3 and 1-minute warning announcements (via a whistle from the starter) for athletes in the assembly area. If a Team Manager is unable to contact an athlete prior to competition, he or she should deliver the bib to the athlete upon the athlete's entry to the Call Room. It is the responsibility of the Team Managers to deliver bibs to the competing athletes.
- 15.9 Para/Multiclass athletes who have hearing aids can have them collected by their team managers at the start line after the starter's briefing.

16 WATER

- 16.1 Water will be available for athletes in the finish area and there will be one refreshment station for competitors on the course.

17 AMENITIES

- 17.1 Toilet facilities for athletes, officials and spectators will be available at the venue.
- 17.2 Food trucks and coffee vans will be onsite.

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18 MEDICAL

- 18.1 First Aid will be set up for anyone requiring treatment at the finish line area. Each Team Manager should have in their possession a copy of emergency contact information for all athletes in their team and should be carrying their own first aid kit.
- 18.2 Asthma Medication
Team Managers are advised that those athletes in all age groups who have been medically prescribed asthma medication will be permitted to take their medication with them to the Call Room and subsequently onto the course. They must, however, advise the Call Room Manager/ Officials with their bib number prior to leaving the Call Room for their event.
- 18.3 Team Area's - Physiotherapy and Massage
All Member Associations will be provided with a Team Tent. There will be Tents for Masters Associations and UniSport athletes. Australian Athletics asks that teams and individuals refrain from setting up physiotherapy and massage tables in key access areas and areas that are used for emergency exits. Teams are responsible for their own physio etc.

19 POST EVENT PROCEDURES

- 19.1 At the conclusion of each event athletes must pass immediately through Post Event Control located near the finish line. Sport Integrity Australia may conduct Anti-Doping testing. If athletes have other duties (such as interviews or presentations) they should sign the acknowledgement and ask the chaperone to wait.

20 TEAM SCORING

- 20.1 The team members (up to 12 per age group and team) must be declared at the time of entry or otherwise altered up until call time for each race. If no changes are made prior to or at call, then the athletes declared will remain the team.
- 20.2 By scoring the least number of points according to the positions in which the scoring members (see numbers to count for points above) of a team finish. The finishing positions of additional competitors, the non-scoring members of a team and the members of a team, which fails to finish the minimum number to score shall be eliminated in the teams point scoring. In other words, in the Australian Cross Country Championships there are no "blockers".
- 20.3 If two or more competitors tie for any place, the points for the places concerned shall be aggregated and divided equally between the competitors so tying.
- 20.4 In case of a tie in points, the team whose last scoring member finished nearest to first place will be the winning team.

21 MEDAL PRESENTATION

- 21.1 Medal presentations (both individual and team) will be made as soon as possible after each event. All placegetters (both individual and team) are asked to assist with this procedure by going with an official at the completion of the event. Each athlete must wear either their competition singlet or tracksuit top for the presentation. Team Managers are requested to assist in ensuring athletes are readily available and are correctly dressed.

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- 21.2 Where an individual athlete representing another country in the competition is placed first, second or third they will receive a commemorative medal according to the actual place in which they finish. No medals will be presented to teams representing other countries.
- 21.3 Team medals will be presented in accordance with the rules described above. The stipulation as to how many teams and therefore how many medals will be presented will be followed. See Regulations 6.
- 21.4 All para-athlete results will be calculated under the AA Baseline Performances.
- 21.5 The Open Men and Open Women 10km – will include an AA under 23 medals for those eligible athletes.
- 21.6 The Open Men and Open Women 10km – will include the UniSport National Championship medal presented by UniSport Australia for those eligible athletes.
- 21.7 The Under 20 Men 8km and Under 20 Women 6km – will include the UniSport National Championship medal presented by UniSport Australia for those eligible athletes,
- 21.8 For all events (able bodied and para) there must be at least three athletes confirmed for an age group for a separate championship event to be conducted and medals awarded.
- 21.9 For the Masters Men and Women Championships – Australian Masters will award medals for registered masters athletes.
- 21.10 There is no distinction between the eligibility of athletes whether entered as a Member Association members or eligible school student. To be clear there is only one set of individual and team medals per event.

22 PROTESTS AND APPEALS

- 22.1 Protests must be lodged initially with the Out of Stadia Referee as per World Athletics Rules (WA TR8).
- 22.2 Appeals to the Review Panel can be made if a Protest to the Referee is dismissed. Appeals must be made in writing on the appropriate form and lodged with the \$50 payable in Cash only. Appeals may be lodged by either the athlete or athlete's representative (usually the Team Manager) and are to be lodged at the TIC.

23 START LANE DRAW

- 23.1 There will be no lane draw.