



NCCA General Competition Rules

2025-2029

1. COMPETITION FORMAT

1.1 There shall be three competitions: T20, One Day Trophy and Championship.

2. MANAGEMENT

2.1 Control of the competitions shall be undertaken by National Counties Cricket Association Ltd ("NCCA") acting by its Board of Directors ("Board"), and all decisions relating to these rules or matches played in the competition shall be final and binding on all concerned.

2.2 NCCA retains ultimate discretion over the Regulations for NCCA Competitions and Playing Conditions and shall be entitled at any time to amend, vary, or add to them on reasonable notice to interested parties as well as in exceptional or urgent circumstances when they shall be entitled to do so immediately upon notification to the interested parties. If any such decision is made on the day of or during a match in relation to which a referee has been appointed the decision shall be notified to the referee who shall give the notification to the interested parties.

2.3 In the case of exceptional or urgent circumstances as referred to in 2.2 the powers of NCCA may be exercised on its behalf by the Operations Director, or if he/she is not available or is conflicted, by the Chair or by a Director nominated by the Chair.

3. ADMINISTRATION

Each National County ("County"), being a member of NCCA shall be required to:

3.1 Submit to NCCA annually a statement of its business structure confirming whether it is merged with or independent from the governing body for cricket within that County.

3.2 Submit to NCCA annually (within 3 months of the County's financial year-end) a copy of its final Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Account and ensure that a copy is published on that County's website.

3.3 Submit to NCCA annually a statement of the level of reserves held, including a written reserve policy and an explanation of any deviation of 10% (above and below the policy).

3.4 Submit annually to NCCA a copy of its Insurance schedule confirming a Minimum of £10m cover for Public Liability and Players, Directors, Officers and Employees Liability.

3.5 Submit to NCCA annually a copy of its County Travel Policy.

3.6 Update annually the information on the 'About us' page on Play Cricket.

3.7 Submit annually an up-to-date Player Database including set criteria i.e. age and eligibility.

3.8 Submit to NCCA annually up-to-date details of its Management / Committee structure including email addresses, mobile numbers and roles of County officers.

4. DIGITAL AND COMMERCIAL

Each County shall be required to:

4.1 Maintain and update as required a County Club website (or in Counties that are merged, a prominent section of the County website)

4.2 Make appropriate arrangements to Livestream all home white ball matches.

4.3 Adhere to the commercial and partnership guidelines which NCCA will issue from time to time.

5. QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

5.1. The ECB Regulations governing the Qualification and Registration of cricketers in First Class County Cricket shall apply to all competitions.

5.2 All County teams must include a minimum number of 8 "homegrown" players (as defined by NCCA and agreed by National Counties) in all games. (See Appendix for definitions and dispensations).

5.3 The total aggregate ages of the 8 youngest players in each team must not exceed 200 years.

5.4. Only players 'qualified for England' shall be eligible to participate in the competitions.

5.5. Each County shall be restricted to playing in any one match not more than one current or former first-class player who has played a total of 40 or more games consisting of any of the following: First Class County Championship matches, List A Games, Test matches home and abroad, representative matches home and abroad recognised as First Class matches, and First Class matches abroad. (For clarity: matches involving University teams do not count toward the total, regardless of which side the player was representing.)

5.6. A player shall only be eligible to play for one County in NCCA competitions in any one season, whether in the same or different competitions.

5.7. No player who during the current season is or has been registered for a First Class County shall be eligible to participate in any NCCA competition unless he has been registered no later than 5.00 pm on the Friday before the County's first game in that competition.

5.8 Players must participate and be present at the ground throughout any match for which they are selected unless prevented from doing so by a genuine and unforeseen emergency. Specifically, no player may play in another match during a Championship, One Day Trophy or T20 match, if this prevents him from participating fully in that match.

6. DEVELOPMENT GAMES

All Counties must organise and play a minimum number of five days of Development XI cricket (unless abandoned due to poor weather or conceded by the opposition) during the season.

7. SANCTIONS AND PENALTIES FOR BREACH OF COMPETITION RULES

7.1 Any County playing an ineligible player in a white ball match will forfeit the match.

7.2 Any County playing an ineligible player in a Championship match will forfeit the points earned from that match.

7.3 Any County playing a First Class registered player who has not been registered for that County within the agreed time periods (5.7), will forfeit the match if in a white ball match or the points earned, if in a Championship match.

7.4 If a County fails to submit a Scorer Report or Captain report within the timescales allowed (72 hours), a financial penalty of £50 will be imposed, rising to £100, then £200 and so on for any subsequent breaches.

7.5 If a County fails to Live-Stream (using at least one camera) any white-ball games, a financial penalty of £250 per game will be imposed.

7.6 If a County fails to organise one or more of its development games, a financial penalty of £1000 per game will be imposed.

8. COACHES:

8.1. Each County is required to have an ECB Level 3 Coach or above in attendance at every game.

9. VENUES:

9.1 In the event of it becoming apparent before a match commences, that no play will be possible because the ground and/or pitch are unfit, an alternative venue shall be permissible, subject to the agreement of both counties.

9.2. Counties are to submit their venues for the forthcoming season by 31st December of the year preceding the relevant season.

9.3 All Counties hosting venues must comply with the NCCA Venue/Ground Requirement Policy.

9.4 Catering Requirements – All Counties will cater for 34 people (16 per team plus 2 umpires) as a minimum. Arrangements for paying for or sharing the cost of any additional guests must be agreed between Counties before the match commences.

9.5 County Representatives - There must be at least one non-match team member of the County in attendance at each match.

9.6 The host County must ensure that a qualified first aider is in attendance at all games hosted by that County.

10. MATCH OFFICIALS

10.1. The arrangements for the selection and appointment of umpires shall be administered by ECB.

10.2. NCCA may, in its absolute discretion, appoint a match referee for any match in any competition, as it considers appropriate. Match referees will act as instructed by the Board.

10.3. Each County shall provide a scorer for each match and all scorers are to use PCS Pro.

10.4. For T20 and One Day Trophy matches, all Counties will use Duckworth/Lewis/Stern integrated with PCS Pro Scorer.

11. MATCH REPORTING

11.1 At the end of each match, both scorers shall complete and agree on an online official result sheet, which the home County shall upload to the relevant County online folder within 72 hours of the end of the match.

11.2 After each match, each captain shall submit an assessment report on the online form provided within 72 hours of the end of the match.

11.3 After each match, the umpires shall submit a joint match report on the online form provided within 72 hours of the end of the match.

11.4 Any injury during the match that requires on-field attention or the injured player to leave the field, must be reported on the play-cricket.com site of the relevant County.

11.5 Any County that fails to meet these requirements shall be subject to a financial penalty, as referred to in paragraph 7 above.

12 LAW 21.2 – FAIR DELIVERY – THE ARM

The principles set out in the 'Procedure to address a suspect bowling action in NCCA Competitions' shall apply to all matches. This procedure, to be followed by umpires and the competition organisers, is appended to this document.

13 GROUND ADMISSION

The home County shall be responsible for the match arrangements and shall retain any gate receipts. The home County or the club whose ground is being used for any match may at its discretion charge for admission and/or parking, but members of NCCA and participating Counties shall be admitted free of charge upon production of evidence of membership.

14 REGULATIONS AND DIRECTIVES

All Counties must adhere to the following processes, guidelines and/or regulations:

- ECB General Conduct Regulations
- Player Registration
- Anti-doping and anti-corruption
- ECB directives relating to fast bowling
- Wearing of protective equipment

*Any other regulations to be added during the contract period.

15 BONUS PAYMENT

Counties will accumulate points throughout the season across all formats. Points will be attributed to wins and finishing positions in each competition. At the end of the season, all Counties will be given a position from 1-20 and receive a bonus payment relating to that position.

Total Fund = £42,000

Position 1 = £4000

Position 20 = £200

Each County from 2-19 will receive an amount reduced in increments of £200 per position.

Appendix 1:

Eligibility Criteria:

1. Age criteria – the average age of the eight youngest players in a team in all NCCA competitions must not exceed 25 years and 0 months on 1st April in the current season.

2. Eligibility criteria – eight members of each team in all NCCA competitions must fulfil one of the following criteria: -
- a. Born in the County
 - b. Educated in the County between the ages of 13-19, i.e. Senior School, College
 - c. Played in a County Age Group team from Under 13 upwards for the relevant County
 - d. *Bona fide* playing member of a club affiliated to the relevant County Cricket Board
 - e. University Criteria – Players who attend a university within a National County will be deemed eligible for that National County for the duration of their university course. Once the course is completed, the player must meet any one or more of the other criteria, 2. a-d, to be eligible as a Homegrown player. The university eligibility status changes at the end of the season when that player's university course finishes.

NB: the eight players in 1. and 2. above do not have to be the same players!

Dispensations and Exceptions

1. Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire

The following dispensation is permitted: -

- a. A player who, currently, meets any of the four eligibility criteria to play for Huntingdonshire may be regarded as a “Home Grown” player by Bedfordshire or Cambridgeshire provided that, in the case of a player qualifying by virtue of his playing for a Huntingdonshire club, that club pays a secondary affiliation fee to Bedfordshire/Cambridgeshire Cricket Board as the case may be.

2. Herefordshire

The following dispensations are permitted: -

- a. A player from the Worcestershire C.C.C. Academy may be regarded as a “Home Grown” player by Herefordshire.

- b. A player from any club affiliated to Worcestershire Cricket Limited may be regarded as a “Home Grown” player by Herefordshire provided that the club pays a secondary affiliation fee to Herefordshire Cricket Limited.

3. Northumberland

The following dispensation is permitted:-

A player from the Durham C.C.C. Academy may be regarded as a “Home Grown” player by Northumberland.

4. North Wales

The following dispensation is permitted:-

A player from North Wales may be regarded as a “Home Grown” player by Shropshire or Cheshire.