



## Briefing to Officials 2026

Welcome on behalf of Leicestershire County Age Groups & Championships 2026

### Hinckley Leisure Centre Braunstone Leisure Centre

I am Gez McLoughlin, your Lead Referee. Thank you for offering to Officiate during the Championships.

Licence Numbers:

24th & 25th January	Hinckley	2EM260133
31st January & 1st February	Braunstone	2EM260134
7th & 8th February	Braunstone	2EM260135

**Please read this before each session you attend, to help the Referees run the event smoothly on the day.**

On arrival, **please report to Lee Smith**, who will check your name off the list and let you know your role for that session. Briefings for officials will be held before each session and will start promptly, 30 minutes before racing is due to start.

#### **Officials Dress Code:**

In line with the revised Swim England Protocol Officials are permitted to wear black trousers, shorts, skirts. From a LASA perspective Officials can wear either white or black and this is a personal decision.

**LASA Polo Shirts:**

A supply of official's polo shirts will be available at every session.

Polo shirts are free if volunteering for the first time and for 3 sessions or more! Then at a Discounted Price for Officials £10 per shirt.

**Payment Instructions:**

Please make payment directly to the LASA account using the details below:

- Account Name: Leicestershire Amateur Swimming Association
- Bank: NatWest Plc
- Sort Code: 60-14-10
- Account Number: 24250600
- Payment Reference: Your Surname Officials Polo Shirt.

Be sure to include the correct reference so we can match your payment.

The polo shirts are available in sizes from Small to XXL

A cash payment can be made if preferred.

**Expenses:**

Travel & Car Park Expenses for Officials:

All attending Officials are eligible to claim travel and car park expenses.

Expense Form:

A copy of the Expense Form is available in the County Age Groups & Championships section of the LASA website: <https://www.leicestershireasa.org/>

Submission Timing:

Please submit your claim after completing your final session.

## **Use of Mobile Telephones & Electronic Devices:**

You will have been notified about the changes to the Swim England Wave power guidance on the use of mobile telephones and electronic devices in changing areas. Please familiarise yourself with this topic and ensure you do not access your mobile telephone or electronic device in this area. LASA are requesting that no mobile telephones are out on poolside, and these should be stored away until you have left the poolside and changing areas.

## **Poolside Accreditation:**

New procedures were introduced last year, and all Team Managers & Coaches will have formal accreditation which has been submitted through Swim England. All Officials are required to always wear their accreditation on poolside. There are newly qualified Officials who may not yet have received their accreditation card from Swim England as the county has been advised that there is currently a delay in these being sent out. If any newly qualified Official has yet to receive their accreditation, please email Lee Smith ([officials@leicestershireasa.org](mailto:officials@leicestershireasa.org)) ASAP and an alternative form of accreditation will be issued.

## **Parking: Hinckley Leisure Centre LE10 1BZ**

There is a large Car Park at the Leisure Centre. There are other car parks nearby which also charge but some are free after 3pm on a Saturday. Please ensure you get a ticket, if required and car park charges can be claimed for. Car parks on Sunday are free. Locations of all nearby car parks are shown on the LASA website.

## **Parking: Braunstone Leisure Centre LE3 1JN**

There is a large Car Park at the Leisure Centre which is free.

## **Food & Drink on Poolside:**

Leisure Centres who run these facilities have a zero tolerance to food on poolside so if you see anyone with food, please deal with it or report it to the referee.

Any bottle tops must be put out of harm's way immediately, as they are a danger to swimmers. Refuse bags will be available on poolside.

No hot drinks or glass are permitted anywhere on the poolside, again if you cannot deal with it, please report it to the referee who will then deal with it.

### **Refreshments: Hinckley Leisure Centre**

Tea & coffee will be provided for all officials in Studio 3 is the same place where Officials will meet and have food etc. We will also provide refreshments for any officials attending both sessions on the same day. Drinking water will be available poolside (The Water Fountain will be in the Store Cupboard at the Starting Station end of the pool) please bring your own reusable water bottle.

### **Bags on Poolside: Hinckley Leisure Centre**

Swimmers will only be allowed drawstring bags on the poolside; lockers are provided £1 required. Officials should not use the changing village – this is for swimmers only. There are many lockers available very close to the Officials meeting room in Studio 3 which also require a £1 coin which is refundable.

### **Refreshments: Braunstone Leisure Centre**

Food and refreshments will be provided in the room above the gym for all Officials who attend both sessions. Drinking water / Tea and coffee will be provided for Officials throughout the event.

The main bar cafe in the reception will be available throughout the meet for any other requirements.

### **Bags on Poolside: Braunstone Leisure Centre**

Please help to keep the number of bags to a minimum on Poolside lockers are available 10p required (refundable).

### **Access for Officials:**

The under-balcony / walkway will be kept clear at each event during the gala except for officials and heats/finalists coming down that way. Swimmers exiting the pool must go back to teams by way of the window side.

Officials at the gala and swimmers are the only people to be at the starting station end or on the stepped end. Team Managers can be behind the stepped end but not on it. Any repeated occurrences should be reported to the referee.

## **HINCKLEY POOL**

### **Emergency Procedure:**

The fire alarm is a siren (loud one) and if it sounds, we will stop the gala. All timekeepers should not leave their station until the swimmer in their lane has vacated the water and then could go back to assist your club.

The turn judge on the balcony side (Lanes 7 & 8) is required to go into the changing rooms advising that the fire alarm has gone off and not allow any more swimmers to go into the changing area, also advise those in there to come back to the poolside (shortest distance to exit).

We are to assemble by the fire exits to await further instruction from the Lifeguard or Places for People personnel, the fire exits are along the window side and are situated at the opposite end to starting stations and also in the same position in the small pool area. Ensure that you are aware of the fire exit positions.

The lifeguard will supply the space blankets for swimmers if we are to evacuate. (referees please note we may have to give some assistance giving out space blankets as there is only one lifeguard!)

In an evacuation, please make your way from the building to the assembly point which is at the band stand directly in front of the Leisure Centre.

We will only return to the pool once cleared to do so by Police, Fire Officer, Lifeguard, or staff of Places for People.

If any official sees a problem relating to safety, please report it to the referee immediately; this will include blocked emergency exits, missing lifeguards, and dangerous objects on the poolside

## **BRAUNSTONE POOL**

### **Emergency Procedure:**

The emergency signal will be a continuous siren. If the lights around the poolside turn red then it is a fire alarm, if it has a white circle as well as red then it is the drowning alarm.

Emergency buttons are situated halfway along the wall at the starting station end, halfway down the window side and the final one is on the wall between changing village poolside entry and the small pool area.

The fire alarm is a siren and if it sounds, we will stop the gala. Timekeepers are not to leave their stations until the swimmer in their lane has vacated the water.

In an emergency all officials should assist in getting the swimmers out of the pool area in an orderly manner without stopping to pick up any bags.

The turn judges on Lanes 1 and 2 at Braunstone are to ensure no one goes into the changing area as we may have to evacuate the building and shout out to warn swimmers already in there that they are to come back to poolside immediately.

Evacuation of the building will be by instruction of the Leisure Centre staff or Lifeguards. Assembly point at Braunstone is in the coach park area. Space blankets for swimmers particularly in wet costumes will be provided by the Leisure Centre staff should evacuation be required.

Should we have to evacuate no one is to return to the building until told to do so by Fire/Police officers and or Leisure Centre staff or Lifeguards.

### **General safety**

If any official sees a problem relating to safety, please report it to the referee immediately; this will include blocked emergency exits, missing lifeguards, and dangerous objects on the poolside.

Watch out particularly for breakable items on the poolside and for hot drinks.

The area inside the black tiles around the pool must be always kept clear of swimmers and coaches; this is to allow the lifeguards clear sight across the pool. Any difficulty in this respect should be brought to the attention of the referee.

If there is an accident / incident forms will be available on the referees' table, all accidents / incidents should be entered on the forms.

The poolside nearest the spectator gallery shall be used by Officials only swimmers exiting the water after their swim should return to their team area using the window side only.

Reusable bottle tops must be put out of harm's way immediately, as they are a danger to swimmers.

No hot drinks nor glass anywhere on the poolside, any issues please deal with it or report it to the referee who will deal with it.

Fire exits - please ensure they are kept clear in case of need.

Please assist in these points as your assistance helps the smooth running of the gala.

Referees, please help with the space blankets which are in a box under the sink unit in the First Aid room if we must evacuate.

**Referees, Starter, Stroke and Turn Judges:**

The list of disability / filming swimmers and their respective events will be on the referees' table. This should be checked before the start of the session and announced at the briefing.

**All Officials:**

If you have any doubts about what you have seen, always give the benefit of the doubt to the swimmer. All officials need to have the new rule **'World Aquatics 2023 - 2025 Infraction Codes dated December 2024'**. If you wish to make a report, please let the referee know as quickly as possible at the end of the race.

**Infractions:**

Remain at your post until relieved to present your verbal report. Once a verbal report is accepted, you will need to complete a disqualification report - do not subtract or add something to the verbal report that the referee has accepted. Report forms will be available on the referee table.

**All Disqualification Report:**

The description given on the report form must be clear and concise, describing exactly what you have seen, including Event No. Lane No. and Turn No. e.g which hand (if one handed touch).

The following matters should be reported to the Referee by any Official:

- Swimmers wearing jewellery / tape.
- Any swimmers wearing Fitbits / watches.
- Costumes without a FINA label / Wearing of two costumes.

**Lap Cards:**

On 800m / 1500m please ask the swimmer which side he/she would like it to be displayed at the side of the starting block. Lap cards to be changed after the turn has been completed, we suggest you act in this order (A) Watch the turn until the end of your jurisdiction (B) Glance at your watch as swimmer touches the wall (C) Change the lap card number. (D) Write down the time you have just seen on your watch. (E) Return to watching your swimmer.

Most importantly, create a pattern of action and stick to it. Lap Cards will be at the start end for 800m/1500m events. Set to 32 for 800s, 60 for 1500s before the start of each heat.

Lean your lap cards towards the centre so both sides can see. A bell will be used to signal to the swimmer when they are starting their last two laps.



**Para-Swimmers:**

Helpers/Chaperones will be on the side of the pool, and at times also appear at the start and end of their events. You may see a tapping stick for the visually impaired swimmers, or someone helping swimmers on to the blocks; please offer appropriate assistance where you can. Any helpers/chaperones will have the correct accreditation for that session.

**Starter:**

The Referee for the relevant race and the Starter must agree on a start that is initiated before the signal.

Backstroke - Please assist with the clearance of the water once a race has been completed and the Referee has given the signal to release swimmers.

Please assist with clearance of the pool after each event (all strokes) once the race has been swum and the Referee is happy to release the swimmers.

**Judge1 / Timekeepers:**

Please make sure you have the correct swimmer in your lane.

All sessions will be using electronic timing. Keep a record of your manual times on your lane sheet.

Please ensure that swimmers exit by the steps, not over the timing pads. We are using over the top starts except for backstroke.

Stand where you have a clear view of the pool end. Watch the start, turns and finish within your jurisdiction in your lane only and ensure they comply with the rules.

If you are happy with the start, turns and finish, step back straight away. If not, remain standing near the block and someone will come over to your lane.

If there is over the top starting, can you please ensure the swimmer in the water is holding onto a lane rope - not the touch pad - and ask the swimmers to vacate the pool (if they're not moving) once the next race has started.

## **Backstroke Start Instruction:**

**Backstroke ledges:** place them out before the start of the race and ask the swimmer if they would like to use them. Place the bar in the middle of the block and make sure it is not twisted and level with the top of the water. When the swimmer has entered the water and taken up the starting position, look over the side and check that a toe on each foot is on the pad and then step back when you're happy.

This can be one of the biggest delays of the event; if we all check, it helps to keep things running smoothly thanks.

Once the swimmer has started the race, observe them up to the end of your jurisdiction, please then remove the ledge and ensure that it is placed in a position that will not impede the swimmer for the duration of their race.

## **Chief Timekeeper:**

Independently time and record the times of the first and last swimmers in each race. Check the electronic board for any apparent faults, and for any finishes not recorded. Check if any Timekeeper hasn't started their watch correctly – and help as required

## **Inspectors of Turns (turning end):**

Stand on the end of the pool between your allocated lanes - even if you only have one lane occupied.

Stand where you have a clear view of the pool end and watch turns within your jurisdiction.

If you are happy with the turn, step back straight away. If not, remain standing and the Chief Inspector of Turns will come over to your lane. If you have a report to make, the CIOT will stand in your lane(s).

In Breaststroke don't forget that a butterfly kick (if performed) can occur at any time prior to, and be followed by, a breaststroke kick.

## **Finish Judges:**

You should record placing and event numbers. Do not confer. If places are needed from the window side, the referee will ask for them over the radio.

Please record your placings on the sheets provided and hand them in at the end of the session; this allows us to check any queries from coaches. This is not to check your placings!

If the Referee does not agree with the AOE or Finish Judge on the AOE/balcony side, the radio will be used to collect the placing from the opposite side.

## **Stroke Judges:**

If the referee or starter deems and signals a false start, stroke judges on both sides should attempt to stop the swimmers by waving to get their attention to the best of their ability. Stroke judges must not independently stop a race, only act if instructed.

**15-Metre Observation:** Monitor the head position of swimmers at the 15m mark in all strokes except breaststroke to ensure compliance with stroke rules.

**Lane Allocation:** In accordance with regional directives, focus your attention on the four lanes closest to your position.

**Support Role:** Where possible, assist the Inspectors of Turns in carrying out their responsibilities effectively

## **Infraction Reporting:**

Any disqualifications will be announced by the Announcer.

All infractions must initially be reported verbally to the Referee by the Official observing the infraction.

If the Referee confirms the infraction, then a written Disqualification Report must be completed using codes from WORLD AQUATICS 2023-2025 Infraction Codes – December 2024.

The AOE Referee will pass to the Announcer details of the event, heat, and lane, and that it was a 'Technical Infraction'

## **Radios:**

Radios will be issued at all sessions as follows:

- Referees
- Stroke judge (window side)
- Chief Inspector of Turns (turning end)
- Finish judge (window side)
- AOE Staff.

Please check if you need a radio before each session.

Those using radios: please ask the referees about radio protocol.

Radios will be sanitised between sessions unless the same official requires one for the next session on the same day. Please return them at the end of the session if you're going home or not fulfilling a role requiring a radio in

**Remember the swimmer gains the benefit of the doubt!**

**See you at poolside, have fun, enjoy your day, and once again a big thank you from LASA, myself and the swimmers for volunteering.**

**Please come and see me if you need any help.**

**Gez.**