



HAMPSHIRE SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

ESAA T&F Champs Selection Guidance 2026

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and clarity for athletes, coaches and parents for the qualification process for this year's Track and Field Championships. It is to be used as a way to help athletes understand what they need to do to put themselves in the best position for qualification, with all decisions ultimately being made by the selection committee.

This year will be particularly challenging for selection due to the complications regarding the age group changes and specifically how this impacts the technical events like throwing and hurdling. Therefore, there will be even more emphasis on performances at the Schools County Championships on 13th June where all athletes can compete in the correct age groups for English Schools and using the appropriate specifications for the events. It is therefore incredibly important to compete at the County Championships this year and will have a very large impact on selection, particularly if we are over 70 athletes with the standard again and we are choosing between several athletes for the remaining spaces.

There will be 2 waves of selection this year. The first will be after the county championships and the 2nd wave will be after Inter Counties on Saturday 20th June.

Selection Guidance

Guaranteed selection will only go to the following athletes (assuming we don't have more than 70 that achieve this):

- Athletes who finish top 2 at the County Championships **AND** have achieved National Standard by Saturday 13th June.

1st Wave of Selection – After County Championships (13th June)

- Athletes who have guaranteed selection via the route above
- Some athletes may also be selected who have finished in the top 2 at the county championships **AND** have multiple entry standards (approximately 3 or more – selection committee discretion)
- Any athletes who **DO NOT** compete at the County Championships **will not be selected in this wave** no matter what standards they have achieved. All athletes are expected to compete and any who do not should inform tfselection@hampshireschoolsathletics.org of the reason why they did not compete. They may still be considered in the 2nd wave of selection, but missing the championships will have a negative impact on your case for selection if deciding between multiple athletes for final spots.



2nd Wave of selection – After Inter Counties (20th June)

All standards achieved up until 20th June will be considered. Anyone achieving a standard between 13th-20th June needs to ensure they have completed the form on the Hampshire Athletic website so we know they have achieved it.

- Athletes who have achieved national standards or multiple entry standards who were not selected in the first wave will be in a strong position for selection.
- Performances at the county championships will carry a lot of weight towards selection. Situations where we need to decide between 2 athletes for 1 spot, will predominantly be decided by their performances at the county championships (both positions and actual performance).
- Any athlete who has achieved an English Schools Standard will be considered for selection even if only achieving it once, with multiple standards putting an athlete in a stronger position.
- Athletes who are very close to a standard may be selected. However, this will only be if we have less than 70 athletes who have achieved a standard. Athletes with the standard will always be chosen over those who have not achieved it.
- We may consider other factors such as rankings and potential to run in the relays, however this will be very low priority compared to the other factors listed above.

Exceptions to the guidance – Throwers and Steeplechasers

Due to the way the age group changes have been implemented for this year's championships, athletes in the lower year of their age group in the throws and some steeplechasers will be limited in their opportunities to compete using the correct specifications for qualification.

To not disadvantage them the following guidance will be used:

- Athletes in these situations who may have only achieved the entry standard once may be selected over athletes in different events who have multiple entry standards. E.g. a bottom year shot putter who has one entry standard but is very close to national standard and has only had the school county champs as an opportunity to achieve it, may be chosen over a 400m runner who has achieved the standard twice but has had many attempts at it over the season.
- Athletes in these situations who achieve entry standards at the county champs (and the inter counties for juniors/inters) will increase their chances of selection.
- The selection committee may consider other factors such as equivalent performances with their own specifications when making their decisions.
- The selection committee **MAY** take into account results from competitions that would not usually count (e.g. some district championships without full officials) as qualification marks. These performances will be taken with 'a pinch of salt' and would likely need to be well over/under the standard to be considered. **These performances would only count as additional performances to be considered; they would still need at least 1 official entry standard from a competition such as the county championships.**
- These decisions will purely come down to the selection committee and who they believe has a better chance of performing well at English Schools.