

England Touch Membership Proposals 2017

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Background

England Touch continues to work hard to increase participation at all levels of our sport. Over the past four years we have achieved this by forging strategic alliances and partnerships, actively promoting and supporting new opportunities to play Touch, and in 2015 revamping our membership scheme to cover all forms of participation.

Membership is vital in ensuring that we can continue to positively contribute to the growth of our sport. This scheme provides England Touch with a reliable and sustainable revenue stream (which significantly outweighs our events income) that allows us to cover corporate and operational costs.

Membership objectives

Our objectives for the membership scheme are to:

- Ensure members (current and future) receive maximal benefit from their relationship with England Touch
- Ensure adequate and appropriate insurance cover is in place for current members
- Ensure England Touch has reliable and complete member data to further drive member engagement and compliance
- Ensure membership income is able to meet a range of corporate and operational expenses, support events, and develop our resources/voluntary staff
- Support England Touch delivery departments to achieve their objectives, including greater participation, through appropriate membership packages and inducements

A period of significant growth and change

Since the inauguration of the membership scheme, England Touch has witnessed:

- Unparalleled growth in the number of people participating at all levels
- Growth in the number of registered clubs and leagues
- Changes in demographics and regional development
- Increased board/committee/volunteer activity and interaction
- Enhanced opportunities for commercial partners and sponsors
- Improved governance policies
- Extension of our offerings, both on and off the field
- A higher public profile for Touch

We are particularly excited to see continued growth in participation, especially given Touch's potential for promoting social and health benefits in a safe and fun environment. The partnership agreement with

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England Rugby's O2 Touch initiative continues to be a key contributor to broadening participation, and we are looking forward to building on the success of this partnership over the coming years. England Touch continually strives to give excellent and personal service and we are constantly investing both time and money into updated programmes and processes to ensure this happens.

Membership refresh

In 2016 we consolidated the expanded membership scheme introduced in 2015. Whilst there are no significant changes for 2017, we are making some minor adjustments. These are intended to ensure that memberships:

- Scale appropriately for all participating individuals and institutions
- Allow us to more effectively serve and communicate with members with a broad range of needs and circumstances
- Remain fit for purpose and future-proof (as far as reasonably possible)

The changes we are making will enable us to continue to develop and grow Touch in England by:

- Maintaining a secure income stream: to ensure a sustainable future for our sport
- Accessing accurate participation data: to guide local and national development plans and funding applications
- Integrating club and player records: to improve the accuracy and tracking of player, coach, and referee activity, and to reduce the administration required by clubs and participants
- Improving our communication and marketing: to ensure you get the information you need and want

Following an internal review, changes to membership will take effect from 1 January 2017. These changes are summarised below and set out in full in Table 1. Different membership categories permit participation in different tiers of events – these are summarised in Table 2. Individual memberships will continue to be required to participate in all levels of events run by England Touch, other than schools tournaments. A new 'affiliate' membership is also being introduced for a nominal fee, allowing us to reach a wider community of university players, non-participants, supporters, and parents/guardians.

Price changes

- Individuals: Introduction of deeper discount for students under 18
- Affiliate individuals: Introduction of new £1 membership category for UTS and Regional DTS participants, and optionally for casual players, parents/guardians and fans/supporters - helping us to connect with a broader demographic
- School clubs: Removal of current £80 fee to encourage further participation from schools around the country
- Full clubs: Replacement of current tiered pricing structure (starting at £125) with flat-rate fee of £150

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- Leagues: No change
(We are looking into the possibility of offering a reduced fee option for leagues with their own insurance cover already in place. To be confirmed before renewals are due.)
- Events: Reduction of current £20 fee per team to £10 per team

Additional changes

- Individuals (Full): Membership requirements will be extended to National DTS and MWTS participants to aid our ability to communicate with broader player base
- Clubs (Full): Simplified player reporting requirements, moving to annual declaration of membership totals rather than full player details. Additional benefits will be added including provision of a referee top and access to participation in a L1 refereeing course. Optional extra 'starter packs' will also be available.
- Clubs (O2 Touch): O2 Touch clubs will need to directly register their membership with the ETA (at no cost) to participate in Regional DTS events
- Leagues: League operators will be able to run one-off events under their existing affiliations, introducing parity with affiliated clubs which already have this benefit
- Events: Pre-payment will be required to allow England Touch to promote the event in advance, bringing additional value to the organiser and avoiding post-event payment defaults
- We will also:
 - Fully migrate all membership registration, payment, and administration functions to a new technology platform that we have already introduced for some membership categories. This will permit members and affiliates to login and manage their own records.
 - Aim to introduce a simplified and more robust system for verification of tournament participants
 - Look to introduce 'minimum standards' guidelines and further assistance for clubs and leagues to ensure the sport keeps its high standards and consistency across the country
 - Pilot England Touch leagues in underserved areas of the country to give more people opportunities to be involved in our sport

We will continually review the benefits and are always open to suggestions on how we can improve further.

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Table 1: Changes to England Touch membership from 1 January 2017

Individuals

Membership Category	Cost	Change	Who is this for?	Administration
Individual: Full	£15 (+ £5 per additional category) ¹	None	Individuals wishing to participate in Tier A & B	Moves from insurer to ETA platform Jan-17
Individual: Full Student (18-23)	£15 (+ £5 per additional category) x 67%	None	Students aged 18-23 in full-time education wishing to participate in Tier A & B	Moves from insurer to ETA platform Jan-17
Individual: Full Student (U18)	£15 (+ £5 per additional category) x 33%	New category	Students aged under 18 in full-time education wishing to participate in Tier A & B	Active on ETA platform Jan-17
Individual: Overseas	£15	None	Individuals not resident in the UK wishing to participate in Tier B events	No change (ETA platform)
Individual: One-off	£5	None	Individuals wishing to participate in only one Tier B event per membership year	No change (ETA platform)
Individual: Affiliate	£1	New category	Individuals wishing to participate in Tier C & E events; optional for casual players, parents, supporters, and volunteers	Active on ETA platform Jan-17

Clubs

Category	Cost	Change	Who is this for?	Administration
Clubs: Full	£150 flat rate	Removal of tiered pricing structure (starting from £125) Clubs to declare only membership numbers, not individuals' details	Clubs wishing to participate in Tier B & E events	Moves from insurer to ETA platform Jan-17
Clubs: Education (University)	£80	None	University clubs wishing to participate in Tier C (or B or E) events	No change (ETA platform)
Clubs: Education (School)	£0	Reduced from £80 to £0	School clubs wishing to participate in Tier D events	Active on ETA platform Jan-17
Clubs: O2 Touch	£0 (Included in RFU-ETA partnership agreement)	None	O2 Touch Centres wishing to participate in Tier E events only. Excludes participation in ETA-run competitions.	No change (ETA platform)

¹ £15 to register as one category of participant: player, referee, coach, or medical personnel; £20 to register two categories, £25 for three, etc.

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Leagues

Membership Category	Cost	Change	Who is this for?	Administration
Leagues: Affiliates	£20 per team entered in largest league of the year. One membership per venue operated.	Permits league operators to run affiliated one-off events	League operators wishing to run competitions that Tier A & B participants are eligible for, along with promotional assistance	No change (ETA platform)
Leagues: ETA Partners	Incorporated into franchise agreement	New category	All ETA league partner leagues	TBC

Events

Membership Category	Cost	Change	Who is this for?	Administration
Events	£10 per team entered	Reduction from £20 per team entered	Event organisers wishing to run competitions that Tier A & B participants are eligible for, along with promotional assistance	ETA platform Payment for a minimum of 4 teams to be made in advance, balance one week prior to event. Refunds only available if event is cancelled, and not later than 60 days after initial deposit.

Table 2: Participation categories and cost of required memberships from 1 Jan 2017

Tier	Participation Description	Individual		Club	
		✓	£	✓	£
Tier A	Elite Squads, England Touch Nationals	✓	£15	X	n/a
Tier B	NTS, CTS, National DTS and MWTC	✓	£15	✓	£150
Tier C	UTS	✓	£1	✓	£80
Tier D	Schools Tournaments	X	n/a	✓	£0
Tier E	Regional DTS	✓	£1	✓	£150

NTS: National Touch Series

CTS: Challenge Touch Series

DTS: Development Touch Series (National: centrally managed by England Touch, Regional: managed directly by approved club)

UTS: University Touch Series

MWTC: Men's and Women's Touch Competitions