

COMPETITION CHANGES SUPERTEAMS

October 2025





INTRODUCTION

Alongside the changes to age groups in Scotland, **scottishathletics** is undertaking a major reform of age-group competition structures across all disciplines to better align with long-term athlete development and improve athlete retention. A key focus of these changes is the Under 12 age group, where participation, enjoyment and foundational skill-building are prioritised over early specialisation and individual performance pressures.

Evidence from participation data and coach feedback indicates that team-based, multi-discipline competitions significantly enhance engagement and retention in this youngest age group. The SUPERteams programme has already proven effective in delivering these outcomes and serves as the cornerstone of proposed changes for U12s.

CURRENT FORMAT

- The U12 competition offering in Scotland is already the SUPERteams competition format: team-based, multi-event competitions aimed at promoting general physical literacy and fun.
- In 2023, a shift from a single national event to regional SUPERteams heats increased average participation from 350–400 athletes to over 500 in 2023–2025.
- However, opportunities remain limited and inconsistent across regions and between indoor/outdoor formats.

PROPOSAL SUMMARY: U12 COMPETITION

1. REGIONALISATION AND FIXTURE CLARITY

- From 2026, five regional SUPERteams heats will still be held annually.
- Three of these will be integrated into the U14/U16 District Track & Field Championships, and two hosted separately to expand accessibility.
- All events will be scheduled clearly in advance as part of the national fixture calendar.

2. INDOOR SUPERTEAMS (FROM 2026)

- Replace the current fixed-team (4 athletes) entry with a flexible club-based entry. Club scores will be calculated based on the top scoring athletes.
- Remove the indoor relay from team scoring to allow flexible team sizes and participation from all entrants (matching current outdoor format)
- Replace individual medals with alternative rewards (e.g. SUPERteams pin badges for each athlete in winning teams and team trophies) to reflect the inclusive, developmental nature of the event and to allow any number of athletes to be included in winning teams.



3. SUPERTEAMS FORMAT IMPROVEMENTS

- Indoor Events: 200m, long jump, shot put and a non-scoring, inclusive mixed relay. Outdoor events: 75m, long jump, turbo javelin and a non-scoring relay. A 4x100m relay will be included in the scores at the outdoor National Final only.
- Indoors, team scores equate to club totals, not individual teams, enabling broader recognition early in the competition year.
- Retain the National Outdoor SUPERteams Final, but position it as an optional “next step” for those preparing for U14 competition.

RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION

- Aligns with Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) principles: focus on agility, balance, coordination, speed and confidence in early years
- Reduces early specialisation, a known factor in youth burnout and dropout
- Promotes inclusion by removing barriers such as rigid team sizes and over-emphasis on ranking
- Responds directly to club feedback about accessibility, fairness, and enjoyment

CLUB SUPPORT

Volunteers will be essential in delivering these updated formats, including:

- Event support roles (host clubs, technical officials and event volunteers)
- Team management for athlete co-ordination and club entries
- Promoting events within clubs and helping younger athletes and parents to understand the format



CONCLUSION

These proposals for U12s represent a critical step in making Scottish athletics more inclusive, developmentally appropriate and sustainable. By refining and expanding the SUPERteams model, we can offer engaging first experiences that encourage young athletes to remain in the sport for years to come. We invite club volunteers to support this transition and help us deliver a better future for our youngest athletes.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Phase	Timeline	Actions
Communication	Oct-Dec 2025	Information to clubs; fixtures confirmed
Indoor Launch	Jan-Mar 2026	Indoor SUPERteams rolled out under new format
Outdoor Rollout	Apr-Jun 2026	Regional outdoor events delivered
Review & Refine	Autumn 2026	Feedback gathered; format evaluated

