



Club/Programme Accreditation FAQs 2025-26

General Accreditation Questions

What is Special Olympics GB Club Accreditation?

Accreditation is the process through which clubs become officially recognised as part of Special Olympics GB. It ensures clubs meet a quality assured level of safety and standards in enabling athletes to access the Special Olympics pathway, from local to international level. A number of key factors feed into accreditation - from mandatory volunteer roles and sports training risk management, through to reporting, policies and other delivery requirements - which ensure a strong infrastructure is in place for the safety and sustainability of both the club and of the organisation. Compliance assures quality, mitigates risk and alignment with sector best practice, which leads to development and growth, which we cannot achieve without a strong foundation.

Who or what needs to be accredited?

Any **club or programme delivering Special Olympics GB sport and activity** needs to be accredited to do so. Individuals are not accredited, but are 'registered' as members through an 'accredited' club or programme.

SOGB Regional committees or other thematic/ geographic groups or forums with a focus on development, and are not delivering any activity or registering members, do **not** currently need to complete an accreditation submission.

Where applicable, some of these groups may still be required to report financial returns and sign an accreditation agreement, as well as notifying SOGB of roles held in these groups. It is best practice to share constitutions and plans with SOGB, including meeting notes, summaries or minutes, - however, this is not currently a mandatory requirement. SOGB do not enforce mandatory committee roles upon these groups in the way this is done for accredited clubs delivering sport and activity.

How long does accreditation last?

Accreditation is completed and approved on an annual basis, subject to meeting the minimum operating standards outlined in the [Accreditation Agreement](#), and is renewed annually around November-December. SOGB accreditation is open year-round for new clubs or organisations to join the network.

What are the Special Olympics GB Accreditation Timelines/Actions to be aware of for 2026?

Please see **page 5** of this document for the **Accreditation Roadmap**, which includes key dates and actions for your club to be aware of and to action, where applicable.

2025-2026 Accreditation Process

What does the accreditation process involve for 2025-26?

This year's process is the same as last year- key points include:

- Re-verification process rather than full resubmission for current documentation
- Submission of updates or missing information deadline of Friday 19th December
- Continuation of streamlined annual review process with simplified forms for sharing updates
- Enhanced support system including drop-in sessions and one-to-one support – **sign up [HERE](#)** to one of our sessions.



I recently completed accreditation - do I need to start over?

No. If you've recently completed accreditation, and have no further updates to share, your information reported and approved will carry forward. We'll simply verify that the information remains current rather than requiring new submissions by sending you confirmation of the information we have on file.

This is applicable for both new clubs/programmes and those who have recently submitted information.

How will the re-verification process work?

Our Network team will review your existing information and send a summary to your club via your main contact directly. The club shall then confirm if everything is still valid or if changes or updates are required. You'll only need to provide updates if:

- Information has changed (e.g., new venue, new/removal of sport sessions, role change etc.)
- Documents have expired or are missing (e.g., DBS checks, session information on a specific sport, etc.)
- New Policies or governance information.

Documents and Information needed

What documents/information do I need for accreditation?

Core requirements for Special Olympics GB Accreditation include:

- Signed and counter-signed [Special Olympics GB accreditation agreement](#)
- Session information and up to date risk assessments submitted – templates available [HERE](#) for risk assessments and session update form is [HERE](#).
- Volunteer registrations complete and fulfil mandatory requirements (outlined in the Accreditation Agreement)
- Active Member Registers complete and information such as sports and roles/sports etc. are recorded and reported
- DBS/ PVG checks complete for relevant volunteer roles – list of roles found [HERE](#)
- Safeguarding training held by club Safeguarding & Welfare Officers – see [HERE](#) for information on training and funding available.
- Best practice: Coaching qualifications held and recorded by all coaches- information on the Toyota Coaching Fund available [HERE](#)
- Best practice: athlete representative appointed – let us know if any athletes in your club/programme are interested in [Athlete Leadership!](#)

How do I submit updated information?

See page 5 of the [Club Information Guide](#) for all links about submitting information.

You can submit updates in the following ways:

- **For sessions:** via the SOGB accreditation update form as first point of call [HERE](#)
- **For registered members (athletes and volunteers):** Email your Active Member Register Excel to our membership inbox: membership@sogb.org.uk
- **For policies/other important information:** Email as above
- For **new volunteers** to register, the online volunteer form is [HERE](#), or reach out to Louise from the team on louise.doe@sogb.org.uk.
- **Other:** During scheduled club check-ins or 1:1 sessions (*may be preferable if you have complex or a lot of updates to share*)



Accreditation information that is missing/pending, must be submitted by **19th December**.

PLEASE NOTE: If accreditation information needed is **not** provided/complete by this date, we will be forced to commence the **closedown process** for your club's accreditation.

Fees and Financial Information

When will I receive my accreditation invoice?

Accreditation fee invoices will be issued in Quarter 1 next year (likely March 2026) which will cover the year of 2026. Any additional member registrations completed between March and August will be invoiced separately in September 2026. If you are unsure about fees, get in touch with accounts@soqb.org.uk.

What payment options are available?

- Standard payment terms (directly invoiced to club finance officer, settled within 30 days)
- Payment plans where needed, including flexible payment schemes (template available for payment planning)
- Get in touch to discuss any other support available for clubs facing financial hardship

What are SOGB Accreditation Fees and what do they go towards?

In summary:

SOGB Accreditation Fees and contributions help towards **keeping clubs strong and safe**. SOGB in return provides support to clubs and members directly, such as:

- Funding and support for competitions locally through to nationally and internationally
- Funding towards coach and volunteer training and wider support
- Club Management processes and safeguarding
- Insurance and branding

If you have any questions about SOGB Club/Programme Accreditation fees, please get in touch with the team on membership@soqb.org.uk.

In detail:

Special Olympics GB impose accreditation fees for its clubs and programmes. The amount is not a 'flat' or 'standardised' amount and is scalable depending on the size of the club/programme. This calculation is based upon the total number of registered active members (Athletes and Volunteers) within the club/programme and is enforced in tandem with the Special Olympics Fees Policy. Please note this is not strictly a 'per person' fee but rather a mechanism to determine a calculation for the total amount.

It's important to address a common misconception about Special Olympics GB's financial position and processes. SOGB is a charity – a non-profit organisation – and not a corporate machine with substantial reserves. SOGB operates well under the average industry expenditure on core costs and works incredibly hard to remain financially viable and sustainable despite significant challenges across the sector.



Our organisation is predominantly funded through our Sport England system partnership and our valued Corporate Partnerships, both of which we prioritise sharing information about as often as possible with our commitment to transparency.

Whilst accreditation fees contribute minimally to core operational costs, we are proud that the vast majority of our overall investment goes directly into supporting our delivery in the following different ways:

- Member access to pathways including competition, leadership and sport delivery/coaching
- Year-round competition and event support grants.
- Year-round coach and volunteer support and training grants.
- Resources, tools, guidance and templates for direct club use – eg. Risk Assessments and other practical resources.
- Sport-specific resources and access to expertise and advisors.
- Opportunity to inform organisational development and strategy including working groups or other leadership programmes.
- Insurance coverage.
- Use of Special Olympics Brand, logo, media and communications, etc.
- Support with fundraising activities (guidance coming 2026).
- Compliance administration processes actioned in-house – including safer recruitment. processes such as DBS checks (can cost between £16 - £49 per person to do this outside of SOGB) and PVG checks (can cost between £18 - £25 per person to do this outside of SOGB), references and data management.
- Policies and Procedures ensuring safety and best practice, including but not limited to those in safeguarding reporting and incident management
- Direct and ongoing support from the SOGB team directly on all club matters
- Ad-hoc opportunities and activities supported through corporate partnership activities or other key partnerships across the network

Through careful financial management and strategic partnerships, we continue to prioritise directing funds where they matter most – into the programmes.

We are committed to supporting the development of opportunities that strengthen our clubs, volunteers, and athletes across Great Britain, ensuring every pound works hard to create meaningful impact for our community.

Support and Resources

What support is available during the accreditation process?

- 1 x Live webinar session which has been recorded and uploaded on the [website](#)
- Virtual drop-in sessions – November/ December - sign up [HERE](#)
- One-to-one support when needed – please get in touch with Amanda on amanda.fleet@sogb.org.uk or on 07869614254.
- Club Information Pack and resources available on the [website](#).

Common Challenges

What if some of our documents are expired?

Contact us immediately to discuss - we can help prioritise what needs updating first and provide direct support through the process.



What if we're struggling to complete requirements by the deadline?

Reach out early for support - we can provide additional support and develop an action plan to help you meet requirements within the deadline. It is vital that information is accurate and up to date with regards to club accreditation.

What if I don't submit the requested information?

There are a number of important considerations clubs must be mindful of if they do not complete their accreditation, including but not limited to:

- **Insurance coverage** validity through accreditation completion – insurance may not be valid if accreditation is incomplete and mandatory requirements for operation are not met. See [HERE](#) for more information on insurance.
- **Access to pathways & competition** – it is our responsibility to ensure that all delivery across Special Olympics GB is compliant – from local and beyond - so that access to competitions and pathways is safe and meaningful. As such, club access to pathways will be restricted and revoked if accreditation is incomplete.
- **Use of SOGB brand, resources and other associations** – it is important for Special Olympics GB to fulfil its obligations to report on membership and network compliance. As such, the use of the Special Olympics GB name, brand and resources is not possible when accreditation is incomplete.

Further Support

Who do I contact with questions?

- Specific accreditation/club questions – Amanda Fleet: amanda.fleet@sogb.org.uk
- Specific matters regarding financial returns and invoices – Jeanette Turner-Gudgeon: accounts@sogb.org.uk
- Volunteering queries and support – Louise Doe: louise.doe@sogb.org.uk
- Safeguarding concerns or queries: safeguarding@sogb.org.uk

See all SOGB Team members and contact information [HERE](#) on the website.

Accreditation Roadmap

