

# British Curling Olympic Programme Membership Policy 2026-27

Version 2 - April 2026



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. British Curling is the governing body for Curling ("the Sport") in Great Britain and also delivers the Scottish Performance Programme. British Curling is not directly affiliated to World Curling, but engages through (primarily) Scottish Curling as the World Curling member. British Curling is funded primarily by UK Sport and home nation Sports Councils to develop the full potential of athletes with medal winning capabilities at the next or subsequent Olympic or Paralympic Games through the World Class Programme ("WCP").
- 1.2. This document outlines the process and criteria that British Curling will use to determine to which athletes it wishes to offer membership of its Olympic Programme.
- 1.3. This Membership Policy is subject to ongoing review and may be updated intermittently and then re-published.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1. This selection policy outlines the process to select individuals onto the British Curling Olympic Programme in order for the World Class Programme ("WCP") to achieve their Performance Objectives. Individuals will, thereafter, be formed into teams across each of the disciplines in discussion with the British Curling World Class Programme Staff. They will also train for and compete in Mixed Doubles as an integral part of their programme and focus.
- 2.2. This Membership Policy does not cover selection to represent British Curling for major events. Selection for major events such as World Championships, and the Olympic Games is governed by separate selection processes. Programme Membership does not guarantee any right or greater right to or any expectation of selection for major events.

## 3. Performance Objectives

- 3.1. The purpose of this selection policy is to ensure British Curling invests in players to create teams to maximise medal potential in the 2030 and 2034 Olympic Games cycles.

## 4. Eligibility

- 4.1. To be eligible to be considered for selection, an individual must be as set out in [UK Sports Funding Eligibility Policy](#):



- 4.1.1. Meet the eligibility and selection requirements of the IOC, the IPC, the BOA/BPA and the athlete's International Federation /NGB to compete for Team GB and to represent or be a member of the GB or Home Nation Teams at International Competitions;
- 4.1.2. Be a British national/British passport holder;
- 4.1.3. Not already be serving a suspension or be ineligible from participating in their sport for any reason
- 4.1.4. Not already be ineligible to receive funding from UK Sport;
- 4.1.5. Not have an unspent conviction for a serious criminal offence in the UK;
- 4.1.6. Not have a conviction for a serious offence relating to betting, manipulation of results or corrupt conduct;
- 4.1.7. Not have brought, or bring, through their actions or comments (directly or indirectly) the National Lottery or UK Sport into serious disrepute. Additionally, to be, or remain, eligible for the Programme, athletes must meet the following criteria required by British Curling
- 4.1.8. Be seeking Programme selection for an event which is confirmed on the event programme for the 2030 Winter Olympics,
- 4.1.9. Sign and return the Programme Athlete Agreement.
- 4.1.10. Be a current member of a Home Nation Curling Governing body (Scottish Curling/ English Curling/ Welsh Curling).

## **5. Athlete Agreement**

- 5.1. The offer of Programme Membership and continued retention on a British Curling WCP Programme is conditional upon the athlete signing the relevant Athlete Agreement and adhering to its terms. Failure to sign the relevant British Curling Athlete Agreement will result in the withdrawal of programme membership. Failure to adhere to the terms of the relevant British Curling Athlete Agreement may result in an athlete being removed from the Programme.

## **6. Programme Membership Criteria**

The following principles will be used by the Selection Panel to select individuals who meet the above essential criteria:

### **6.1. Individual Athlete Considerations:**

- 6.1.1. Performance Data - Results, rankings and achievements during the previous three seasons;
- 6.1.2. British Curling's 'What It Takes to Win' model (WITTW) – Programme insights on individual competence against the pillars of Curling Performance and Athlete Performance, and the variables that sit underneath those pillars; and



6.1.3. Team Performance Potential – Programme insights into the individuals best capable of forming sustainable winning teams

**6.2. British Curling Programme Considerations:**

6.2.1. The Programme Objective;

6.2.2. The number of athletes currently on each of the British Curling Programmes and the ability for British Curling, within resources, to appropriately service each team and offer competition opportunities to athletes; and

6.2.3. The allocation of available Athlete Performance Awards (“APA’s) across the British Curling Programmes, in the context of progress and potential to achieve the Programme Aims

**7. Selection Timelines**

7.1. Programme Membership decisions will be made by British Curling around or before the 1<sup>st</sup> week in June annually. For successful athletes this will include confirmation of team line-ups for the upcoming season (where relevant) and any information in relation to their selection.

7.2. Selected athletes / teams agree not to make any public announcement to the media or public in any form (including personal websites) regarding their selection until British Curling have announced the programme selections for the year ahead. British Curling will work with selected athletes / teams to ensure coordination of announcements.

7.3. All athletes currently (2025-26) on the British Curling World Class and Performance Foundation Programme will be automatically considered for Programme Membership the following year unless the athlete has informed the Performance Director and the Olympic Head Coach that they do not wish to be considered.

7.4. All external athletes that would like to be considered for Programme Membership must submit an Expression of Interest to [performance@britishcurling.org.uk](mailto:performance@britishcurling.org.uk)

**8. Selection Panel**

8.1. All selection decisions will be made at a meeting of the selection panel, the Selection Panel membership is as follows:

## 8.2. Olympic World Class Programme:

Role	Description
<b>Performance Director</b>	Voting Member
<b>Olympic Head Coach</b>	Voting Member
<b>Sport Org Board Representative</b>	Voting Member
<b>Head of Performance Support</b>	Non-voting member providing technical advice
<b>British Curling Data Scientist</b>	Non-voting member providing technical advice
<b>Olympic Pathway Manager</b>	Non-voting member providing technical advice
<b>Sport Org Representative</b>	Chair of Meeting and Non-voting member
<b>Performance Administrator or Performance Operations Manager</b>	Official Record Keeper Non-Voting
<b>British Elite Athletes Association Representative</b>	May opt to attend and scrutinise the process, hold the panel accountable to the policy and its criteria, and ensure the principles of fairness and acting without bias are upheld. Non-voting member.
<b>UK Sport Performance Advisor</b>	May opt to attend selection meetings as an observer and non-voting member

8.3. The Selection Panel will consider the stated selection criteria in making its decisions and may also consult other staff support specialists where appropriate. The selection process is generally an exercise of judgment. Selection decisions are necessarily subjective and an exercise of expert opinion. This is particularly relevant in the aspect of forming teams. As such, while an appeals policy is provided for individuals to appeal non-selection on the grounds that the policy has not been adhered to, athletes are not able to appeal against selection decisions on any other grounds including against a Panel member's judgment. A process whereby an individual can request an appeal of a decision is provided below.

## 9. Programme Membership Review

9.1. Team and individual performance reviews will be held quarterly in line with the WITTW framework. Performance, WITTW and goal setting data will be reviewed with athletes, coaches, the data scientist and the Head of Performance Services.



9.2. Athletes may be de-selected from the programme where continued inclusion is no longer aligned with performance objectives, progression benchmarks, or behavioural standards expected within the British Curling World Class Programme. De-selection decisions will be evidence-based, transparent, and proportionate.

9.2.1. De-selection may occur under the following scenarios:

9.2.1.1. **Performance Criteria Not Met:** Failure to achieve agreed performance standards, trajectory benchmarks, or competition results within the review period.

9.2.1.2. **Plateau or Regression:** Demonstrated lack of progression or sustained decline in performance, where no clear justification (e.g., injury with recovery plan) is evident.

9.2.1.3. **Behavioural or Conduct Issues:** Breaches of athlete agreements, codes of conduct, or failure to engage with programme expectations (e.g., training compliance, professionalism).

9.2.1.4. **Health and Wellbeing Considerations:** Medical or wellbeing factors that limit the athlete's ability to train or compete at the required level, following appropriate medical review.

## 10. Athlete Performance Awards

10.1. The APA is a grant paid by UK Sport to athletes either on the Curling WCP Olympic Programme and who have been nominated to receive the same by British Curling SLT. The APA is an award intended to proactively contribute towards the development and delivery of an athlete's yearly competition and training plan (YTP), including the performances delivered as part of that YTP. It is not intended to be a reward or bonus to be expected following levels of success.

10.2. The APA (particularly those at A and B levels) is intended to cover both living costs and athlete specific costs.

10.3. The living costs element of the APA is intended to contribute to general living costs likely to be incurred by an athlete, including by way of example only: rent/mortgage, bills, basic food, general clothing, telephone, and household insurance, National Insurance contributions and a stakeholder pension.

10.4. The athlete specific costs element of the APA is intended to contribute to curling specific sport costs, including by way of example: personal training equipment, internet and mobile costs, car costs, other UK travel costs related to training and competition, training clothing, nutritional/dietary supplements, local gym membership, consumables and sport specific equipment.



- 10.5. UK Sport has allocated British Curling a maximum number of APAs for curling athletes offered Programme Membership to the Olympic Programme. Nominations for APAs are made by British Curling to UK Sport. UK Sport review nominations against the agreed APA matrix criteria and may challenge the nomination where it does not fall in line with the criteria as published.
- 10.6. Curling athletes will be nominated for APA levels based on the criteria set out in the UK Sport approved APA matrix. Note for 2026-27 there will be a new matrix signed off for the 2030 cycle. This will be made available once agreed with UK Sport post May.
- 10.7. UK Sport will require athletes to declare any other sources of income to UK Sport and may determine that any athlete whose total income (including APA) exceeds £65,000pa will have their APA award reduced pound for pound above this threshold.
- 10.8. British Curling will not be able to recommend to UK Sport that an APA or further APAs shall be paid unless British Curling can verify to UK Sport that the relevant British Curling Performance Athlete Agreement has been signed.
- 10.9. British Curling are not obliged to award Programme Memberships in respect of the total number of APA allocations. British Curling may also offer an athlete membership of a Programme and access to part of the benefits thereof without making a nomination to UK Sport for that athlete to be awarded an APA.
- 10.10. Any athlete in receipt of an APA must have sign off from the Performance Director and Olympic Head Coach before entering into any professional sporting contracts. For 2026-27 any contracts that existed or were agreed prior to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2026, must be re-agreed.
- 10.11. It is the athlete's individual responsibility to manage the personal taxation, national insurance and pension aspects and it is highly recommended that athletes receiving APAs seek appropriate expert advice from an accountant or financial advisor. Further information, including guidance notes and a list of recommended accountants, can be accessed via the British Elite Athletes Association [www.britisheliteathletes.org](http://www.britisheliteathletes.org)
- 10.12. Some further guidance as to how an APA is managed during specific situations such as illness and Injury, Pregnancy and Programme Breaks, is outlined in **Appendix 1**.
- 10.13. **Talent Transfer**
  - 10.13.1. Athletes who have transferred from another WCP will initially be considered by British Curling for Programme Membership and nomination for an APA for the level at which they were at in their previous WCP, or up to a maximum of C level for a period of up to 12 months following the UK Sport funded Talent Transfer period, to include a minimum of one major event (e.g. World Championships). During this period the athlete will be



required to meet the Programme Membership Criteria. At the first available Programme Membership Review, following the first major event, their appropriate APA level will be reviewed, and the recommendation may be adjusted accordingly.

**11. APA Funding During Athlete Transition**

11.1.1. Information on APA funding during athlete transitions into and out of the programme can be found in Appendix 2.

**12. Programme Membership Appeals**

12.1. The British Curling WCP Programmes operates a formal appeals procedure for challenging Programme Membership decisions (Termination of Programme Membership, non-renewal of Programme Membership) which is available upon request from [performance@britishcurling.org.uk](mailto:performance@britishcurling.org.uk).



## Appendix 1 Management of APA's during Specified Periods

### 1. Injury and Illness

- 1.1. In the event of injury/illness (both physical and mental), and in cases where an athlete is considered likely to recover to full fitness for training and competition, the athlete should continue to receive their full APA up to three months from the point the injury/illness occurred or was identified.
- 1.2. If after three months the athlete remains unavailable for full selection or training, an expert review should be undertaken to confirm the likelihood that the athlete remains able to pursue success in the Olympic Games, to agree a programme of rehabilitation and to plot a timetable for return to full training and competition.
- 1.3. Each case will be considered on its own merit, and further expert advice may be sought where the long-term impact of the injury/illness is unclear (such as referral to the mental health panel). Where an athlete has been injured or ill for more than three months, this should be stated on the next nomination to UK Sport.
- 1.4. Subject to satisfactory evidence of the likelihood of return, the APA should continue to be paid at the existing award level for up to a year but will only be extended beyond this in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.5. Where there is medical evidence that the injury/illness will affect the long-term potential of the athlete, or where the athlete has shown neither progress nor commitment to the agreed rehabilitation programme, the athlete can be removed from APA support providing an appropriate period of notice is given – see Athletes Leaving the Programme.

### 2. Pregnancy and Parenthood

- 2.1. Athletes who are pregnant will be supported in accordance with the [UK Sport Pregnancy Guidelines](#).
- 2.2. Being pregnant and an elite athlete should not be mutually exclusive. To ensure support is provided for athletes who wish to have a child whilst they are in membership of a high-performance programme and in receipt of an APA, the following policy will apply:
- 2.3. Athletes in receipt of APA funding will remain eligible to access their full APA (subject to means testing) for the duration of the pregnancy at the APA level they were on at the time of becoming pregnant and for up to nine months post childbirth.
- 2.4. Continued access to the APA post childbirth will be dependent on:
  - 2.4.1. The athlete's intention to return to the sport and the programme being discussed and confirmed no later than six months post childbirth
  - 2.4.2. At the point where the intention of the athlete is clear, forming a mutually agreed plan/timetable for return to training and competition – this plan should acknowledge the athlete's experience of pregnancy, the impact on them physically and mentally and the nature of the event they are returning to



2.4.3. Monitoring, reviewing and confirming that the athlete has made the necessary commitment to this plan and is on track to return.

- 2.5. If the level of commitment and or progress against this plan are not demonstrated, the athlete would be given notice and offered a period of transition before the APA funding stops (see Athletes Leaving the Programme).
- 2.6. At nine months post childbirth the potential of the athlete should be assessed and confirmed to UK Sport in order to continue to access the APA. It is important to note that this assessment should indicate the athlete's future medal potential and not necessarily performance outcomes.
- 2.7. An athlete who announces retirement from their sport during pregnancy or in the initial six months post childbirth, will not be given a further period of notice before the APA terminates.
- 2.8. In the event of complications either during the pregnancy or post childbirth, this policy will be flexed as is reasonable to accommodate these circumstances on a case by case basis
- 2.9. Athletes wishing to take a period absence or reduction in training for parental considerations will be supported by the programme. Any requests for absence should be discussed with the Olympic Head Coach and Performance Director as early as possible so they can be factored into the YTP.

### **3. Athlete Programme Breaks**

- 3.1. An athlete may request 'time away' from their sport.
  - 3.2. Typically, athlete programme breaks will be undertaken in the first two years of a cycle (typically four years).
  - 3.3. In the event of an athlete taking a programme break, the APA can continue to be received for a maximum of 12 months. For breaks of up to 6 months, the athlete will receive their full APA (subject to means testing) from the point the break is agreed with the Performance Director. For requests of between 7 and 12 months, the athlete will receive the full APA for the first 6 months, and 50% of their APA for the remainder.
4. Each case will be considered on its own merit, reflecting on but not be limited to the following criteria:
    - a) The athlete's performance trajectory and selection expectations, considering any impact on world rankings, qualification (should the request be made in cycle), and any other considerations that might materially impact on the athlete's ability to meet agreed Games targets. Athletes should acknowledge the impact this may have on the APA grade being nominated for at the formal athlete review.
    - b) A robust performance rationale for the break.
    - c) An agreed fitness programme being in place, ensuring an appropriate level of fitness is retained to enable a smooth transition back into the programme at a mutually agreed time.
    - d) Touch points with the programme being agreed.
  5. Upon agreement of a programme break, the athlete will need to be renominated for an APA on the Athlete Nomination Portal, this can happen for up to a maximum 6 months. At 6 months, an athlete review will be conducted, and a renomination is required.
  6. For programme breaks of less than 3 months, nominations are not required.
  7. Continued access to the APA post programme break will be dependent on:
    - a) The athlete's intention to return to the sport and the programme being discussed and confirmed no later than one month before the programme break end date.



- b) At the point where the intention of the athlete is clear, forming a mutually agreed plan/timetable for return to training and competition.
  - c) Monitoring, reviewing and confirming that the athlete has made the necessary commitment to this plan and is on track to return.
8. If the level of commitment and / or progress against this plan are not demonstrated, the athlete would be given notice and offered a period of transition before the APA funding stops (see Athletes Leaving the Programme).
9. An athlete may request 'time away' from their sport only once in an Olympic or Paralympic cycle (typically four years).
10. An athlete extending a period of downtime following participation at the LA 2028 or the French Alps 2030 Games into an Athlete Programme Break must notify their sport within 8 weeks of the LA Games and French Alps Games of their intent, i.e., whether they wish to continue to the Brisbane Olympic or Paralympic Games or the Salt Lake City Olympic and Paralympic Games.



## Appendix 2

### APA Funding During Athlete Transition

#### APA Funding During Athlete Transition

##### 1. Athletes Joining the Programme

1.1. All athletes should participate in a comprehensive induction process when joining the high-performance programme and when changing between levels of the Performance Pathway. Where athletes are new members of the programme and are receiving an APA for the first time, the sport should ensure the athlete(s) are provided with sufficient support and opportunity to effectively transition into the programme.

##### 2. Transitions within Teams / Partnerships

2.1. Where an athlete is in receipt of a Podium level APA and is adversely impacted by the retirement of a partner or team member(s) a period of transitional APA funding can be agreed before an objective performance assessment of the newly formed team takes place. In these cases, the APA can be sustained at the current level (or at the Games Potential level) for up to two years.

##### 3. Transition Between Events / Disciplines

3.1. Where an athlete is in receipt of a Podium level APA and transitions to a new event or discipline within their sport, a period of transitional APA funding can be agreed before the athlete is expected to meet the performance criteria within the new event or discipline. In these cases, the APA can be sustained at the current level (or at the Games Potential level) for up to two years.

##### 4. Transition Between Sports

4.1. Where an athlete is attempting to transfer between two sports, and is currently in receipt of an A, B, C, or Games Potential APA, the athlete can be nominated for a transitional APA for up to two years before being expected to meet the APA selection standards in the new sport.

4.2. The APA can be extended beyond 12 months where circumstances prevent an athlete achieving a result or performance, which could include:

- a) Injury, illness, or pregnancy (see below)
- b) External factors such as cancelled competition opportunities
- c) The sport's schedule for athlete selection not aligning to this timescale.

##### 5. Transition Between Countries

5.1. Athletes who wish to transfer from another country to compete for Team GB, Paralympics GB and the NGB at international competitions are not eligible to receive Public Funding and/or Publicly Funded Benefits until the Athlete (in addition to obtaining a British Passport or British



Nationality) has received written confirmation from the BOA or BPA and the NGB of their eligibility to compete at international competitions.

- 5.2. Notwithstanding the above, Training Partners will be eligible to receive Publicly Funded benefits only where they have the right to work (in accordance with 3.3 of the Eligibility Policy) and meet all other eligibility criteria set out within the Eligibility Policy.
- 5.3. Where a GB athlete wishes to transfer to and compete for another county, and / or if they have already qualified for the other country and obtained results (that means they are no longer eligible to compete for, or represent GB at international competitions), then the athlete will not be entitled to receive any Public Funding and/or Publicly Funded Benefits, as outlined in paragraph 3 of the Eligibility Policy.

## **6. Athletes Leaving the Programme**

- 6.1. NGBs must state from the outset - with UK Sport and when athletes join the high-performance programme - the policies and processes that they will follow and the support available for the health and welfare of athletes leaving the programme.

- 6.2. A notice period of one-month must be provided to all athletes that are no longer nominated for an APA, or who will receive a reduction in APA funding due to the grade at which they have been nominated. This period of notice should be within an athlete's current award term.

For example, an athlete in receipt of an APA from 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 should be informed that they are no longer nominated for an APA through their athlete review by 28 February 2025. This is to allow for this notice period and paperwork to be turned around.

- 6.3. Athletes that are no longer nominated for an APA must receive formal and written confirmation of their one month's notice, and the period of any additional transitional funding received. The start date (first day of the month) and end date (last day of the month) should be clearly stated. It is recommended that the Performance Lifestyle Practitioner is copied into this confirmation.
- 6.4. Additional transitional funding will be offered at the current APA grade for a period dependent on the total continuous period of programme membership. This additional transitional funding will be provided as follows:
  - >1 year but <2 years = 1 month transitional award
  - >2 years but <3 years = 2 months transitional award
  - >3 years = 3 months transitional award



- 6.5. Where appropriate, programmes will be expected to provide continued access to essential services and support during the transitional period and specifically to medical services where this is necessary to support the treatment of a pre-existing medical condition.
- 6.6. Whilst sports are asked to accommodate as much of the transitional award period as possible within the current award term, new athletes can be nominated before the transitional award period ends. Any new athletes brought onto the programme during this period will not count towards the sport's utilisation figures.
- 6.7. Once an athlete leaves the programme, they will no longer receive access to medical cover through AMS. However, AMS cover will continue for up to a maximum three months after the month their funding ceases, for an existing medical claim and treatment to finish. No new claims can be opened within this three-month extension period.
- 6.8. If an athlete's pre-authorised treatment is postponed and the rearranged date is outside this 3-month window, the athlete must contact the AMS Manager at [ams@teamgb.com](mailto:ams@teamgb.com) as soon as possible to ensure the rearranged treatment will be covered.
- 6.9. Where an athlete is leaving the programme for disciplinary reasons, or due to a lack of engagement in the programme, the NGB and UK Sport in consultation, have the discretion to revoke any transitional funding.
- 6.10. Any athlete returning to the programme having previously received transitional funding will begin a new period of programme membership. As per framework above.