

British Curling Olympic and Paralympic Programme Membership Policy - Milan Cortina Cycle

Version 1 - April 2022

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 Federation (“the WCF”), but engages through (primarily) Scottish Curling as the WCF 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 and Paralympic Programmes
- 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 and Paralympic 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. They will also train for and compete in Mixed Doubles (Olympic and Paralympic) 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 and Paralympic 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 2026 and 2030 Olympic and Paralympic Games cycles.

3.2. Olympic Programme Aim – Win 3x Medals at the 2026 Milan Cortina Winter Olympic Games

3.3. Paralympic Programme Aim – Win 2x medals at the 2026 Milan Cortina Winter Paralympic Games

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 2026 Winter Olympics or Paralympics,

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 a 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 three pillars of Tactics, Shot Making and Readiness; 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 Aims;
- 6.2.2. The number of athletes currently on each of the British Curling Programmes and the ability for the 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 1st week in July annually. For successful athletes this will include confirmation of team line-ups for the upcoming season 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 (2021/2022) 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 Executive Performance Director and 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 at the following link – before the below deadlines:

7.4.1. Olympic Programme (Including PF Teams) – **5pm on Wednesday 25th May 2022**

7.4.2. Paralympic Programme – **5pm on Friday 17th June 2022**

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 Podium & Podium Potential and Paralympic:**

Role	Description
Executive Performance Director	Voting Member
Olympic / Paralympic Head Coach	Voting Member
British Curling Board Representative	Voting Member
Lead Performance Analyst and/or Head of Performance Support	Non-voting member providing technical advice
British Curling Pathway Manager	Non-voting member providing technical advice
Performance Operations Manager or Head of Performance Support	Chair of Meeting and Non-voting member
Performance Administrator or Performance Operations Manager	Official Record Keeper Non-Voting
British Athletes Commission Representative	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.

UK Sport Performance Advisor	May opt to attend selection meetings as an observer and non-voting member
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8.3. Olympic Performance Foundation:

Role	Description
Executive Performance Director	Chair of Meeting
Olympic Head Coach	Voting Member
British Curling Pathway Manager	Voting Member
Scottish Curling Board Representative	Voting Member
Scottish Curling Academy Manager	Observer and to provide insight if required
Lead Performance Analyst and/or Head of Performance Support	Non-voting member providing technical advice
Performance Administrator or Performance Operations Manager	Official Record Keeper Non-Voting
British Athletes Commission Representative	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.
UK Sport Performance Advisor	May opt to attend selection meetings as an observer and non-voting member

8.4. 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. Programme Membership is allocated and reviewed by the British Curling Senior Leadership Team on a quarterly basis (or more frequently if required). In order for proceedings to be valid, the Panel must consist of the Executive Performance Director, Olympic/Paralympic Head Coach and Head of Performance Support. In addition, there may be one or more additional legally qualified individuals as appointed by the Executive Performance Director of British Curling, who will not have voting rights but will be present to act as an independent observer(s), to supervise procedures and to ensure that both due process is followed and that criteria are appropriately applied.
- 9.2. At each quarterly review the panel will consider:
 - 9.2.1. The Programme Membership status of existing Programme athletes and either: confirm or remove (if appropriate) an athletes offer of Programme Membership and/or change their APA level (where appropriate). In the event that the number of athletes on the Programme needs to be re-allocated this will also be considered; and
 - 9.2.2. Such athletes not currently on the British Curling Programme, British Curling shall consider to be eligible for consideration and either offer them Programme Membership, defer or decide not to offer them membership.

10. Injury and Illness

- 10.1. 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.
- 10.2. 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/Paralympic Games, to agree a programme of rehabilitation and to agree a timetable for return to full training and competition.
- 10.3. 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). The athlete's progress against the timetable will need to be reported to UK Sport every three months thereafter, until the athlete has either fully resumed training and competition or left the programme.

10.4. 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.

10.5. 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.

11. Pregnancy

11.1. 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:

11.2. 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.

11.3. Continued access to the APA post childbirth will be dependent on:

11.3.1. The athlete's intention to return to the sport and the programme being discussed and confirmed no later than six months post childbirth

11.3.2. 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

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

11.4. 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).

11.5. 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.

11.6. 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.

11.7. 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

12. Talent Transfer

12.1. 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.

13. APA Funding During Athlete Transition

13.1. Athletes Joining the Programme

13.1.1. All athletes should participate in a comprehensive induction process when joining the high-performance programme or 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.

13.2. Transition within Teams

13.2.1. 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 Milan-Cortina Potential level) for up to two years.

13.3. Athletes Leaving the Programme

13.3.1. NGBs must state from the outset the policies and processes that they will follow and the support available for the health and welfare of athletes leaving the programme.

13.3.2. A minimum of a one-month notice period should be provided to all athletes that are no longer nominated at Podium or Podium Potential level or will receive a reduction in APA funding as a consequence of the level at which they have been nominated.

13.3.3. This period of notice should be within an athlete's current award term, i.e. athlete reviews should be conducted before APAs are due to expire to allow for this notice period and paperwork to be turned around.

13.3.4. Additional transitional funding will be offered at the current grant level for a period of time dependent on the total continuous period of programme membership.

13.3.5. 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.

13.3.6. 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.

13.3.7. Once an athlete leaves the programme, they will no longer receive access to medical cover through AMS ('Athlete Medical Scheme'). 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.

13.3.8. 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.

14. Programme Membership Appeals



14.1. 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.